

nothing to make  
four-legged  
and even  
eter — ice cream

ELHEIM (AFP) —  
dog who has ever  
g, there is now some  
g else to keep the  
write pooch pamper  
special ice cream  
Available in chocolate or vanilla flavor  
Meister's comes  
shape of a dog's head  
is being launched in  
peimann chain of stores  
The idea for the  
ice cream came from  
inventor, Her  
zorek, when he saw  
owners letting the  
dogged friends of  
doggy friends of the  
ice cream under the  
With this in mind  
zorek created an ice  
cream for dogs with  
a sugar content that  
is more suited to a dog  
— though humans  
like the ice cream too.

de launches  
ka meatballs

CKHOLM (AFP) —  
ish woman living in  
United States is  
shed vodka-flame  
beats moving two  
fish concepts into  
new wine restaurant  
ing to press type  
Nathaniel, who  
lived in the United  
States for more than  
a decade, has  
opened a new restaurant  
in the heart of the city  
of Stockholm. The  
restaurant, called  
"The Fish House",  
is a small, intimate  
place with a focus on  
fresh fish and local  
ingredients. The  
owner, who is a  
former chef, has  
created a menu that  
is both innovative and  
traditional. The  
restaurant is expected  
to be a success.

adelphia police  
lookout for  
"knob thief"

PHILADELPHIA (AP) —  
Police are looking for a  
man who stole a gold  
chain from a woman's  
neck. The woman, who  
was wearing the chain  
when she was shopping  
at a store, said she  
noticed it was missing  
when she got home.  
The police are looking  
for a man who is  
about 5 feet tall, with  
dark hair and a mustache.  
He is wearing a dark  
jacket and light-colored  
pants. The police are  
offering a reward of  
\$500 for information  
that leads to the man's  
arrest.

e fingers  
ve blind singer

PHILADELPHIA (AP) —  
A blind singer is  
looking for a new  
manager. The singer, who  
has been performing for  
years, is looking for  
someone who can help  
him with his career.  
The singer is a man  
who is about 30 years  
old and has a deep  
voice. He is looking  
for a manager who is  
experienced and has  
a good network. The  
singer is willing to  
work for a low salary  
if the manager can help  
him get more gigs.

## King receives call from Clinton

HOUSTON (AFP) — U.S. President Bill Clinton spoke by telephone briefly with King Hussein Tuesday, the White House said. King Hussein praised President Clinton for his role in reaching an accord on Northern Ireland and for his recent trip to Africa, spokesman Joe Lockhart said. The conversation lasted about 10 minutes and followed a call the King made to President Clinton Monday evening, he added. No details were given on what the two said about the Mideast peace process.

## King names Princess Sumaya's newborn

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday named the baby-girl born last month to Her Royal Highness Princess Sumaya Bint Al Hassan and Nasser Judeh, director general of Jordan Television and Radio Corporation, at a special ceremony held at the Royal Court in the presence of Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Hassan, Princess Sarvath, Prince Mohammad, the King's personal representative, Royal Family members and the Judeh family. King Hussein named the baby Sukaina.

## Two Israeli soldiers wounded in Lebanon

MARIJAYOUN (AFP) — Two Israeli soldiers on patrol were wounded in an attack by Hizbollah guerrillas in southern Lebanon on Wednesday, Lebanese security sources said. Hizbollah guerrillas triggered a powerful explosion as an Israeli armoured vehicle passed by on patrol near Aashiyeh, on the edge of the central sector of the self-declared Israeli "security zone," the sources said. The attack was claimed in a statement by Hizbollah.

## PNA allows Reuters office in Gaza to reopen

GAZA CITY (AP) — The Palestinian National Authority allowed the Gaza City office of the Reuters News Agency to reopen on Wednesday, six days after it was shut down for "violating the Palestinian national interests by helping Hamas." The office had been ordered closed for three months by police after Reuters broadcast a videotape made by the Islamist group Hamas. It was not immediately clear why the office was given permission to reopen on Wednesday.

## Moroccan aid flown to Baghdad

BAGHDAD (AFP) — A Moroccan plane filled with food and medical aid arrived in the Iraqi capital on Wednesday, under an exemption to the U.N. sanctions, the official news agency INA reported. It was the second aid flight to be chartered by the Moroccan trade union confederation CDT since March 3. Loaded with 10 tonnes of food, medicine and clothes, the plane landed at the capital's Saddam International Airport. Nubir Mohammad Amawi, the CDT secretary general, told INA that such aid operations would continue "until the lifting of the embargo on Iraq and the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the Gulf."

## IMF hopes to open office in Khartoum — report

KHARTOUM (AFP) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has told officials here that it hopes to open an office in Khartoum, the Sudanese capital, the official SUNA news agency reported Tuesday. A message from the IMF was sent recently to Sudanese President Omar Al Bashir, it reported. The IMF told the Sudanese that the IMF was impressed by Sudan's economic performance in 1997 and the first three months of 1998, the agency reported. The IMF is ready to help Sudan implement its economic reform plans for the period 1998-2003, it said.

# Jordan Times

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## Citing attempts to roil ties with PNA and Arabs, King asks government to draft new press law

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein on Wednesday instructed Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali to submit a new press and publications draft law to Parliament as soon as possible, stressing that the new law must serve as a deterrent to anybody trying to tamper with Jordan's relations with other Arab countries or harm national unity.

"I expect your government to take the necessary measures in submitting a new press and publications draft law that would deter anyone from harming Jordan's relations with Arab states or adversely affecting national unity," the King said in a letter he sent to the prime minister.

"From time to time, we are surprised to see writers misleading the public with their writings in our newspapers and weeklies attacking the Palestinian leadership, and slandering them and casting suspicion about them," the King pointed out. "This behaviour might suggest to our Palestinian brothers that we adopt a policy contrary to what we declare, or that we do not respect our decisions and commitments. It might look as if we have more than one face, or that we have ambitions or reason to weaken them or to negatively affect their position at the most crucial stage they are going through."

"This is totally untrue and we believe the repeated

offences and slandering can only serve the enemies of Palestine and Jordan alike," added the King.

"When I instructed your government to rectify the question of press and publications, I was really worried about our democratic march and the freedom of the press that some enemies are trying to ruin, and there was an urgent and vital need for addressing the situation," the King pointed out.

He added: "This was followed by a verdict from the High Court of Justice ordering a suspension of the temporary law, which had been enacted in a manner to protect both the public interest and the interests of newspaper owners at the time," recalled the King.

He said: "The government has respected the court's decision and avoided calling on the Higher Council for the Interpretation of the Constitution to give a ruling on this matter out of respect for the judiciary, although that verdict was a dangerous precedent which we hope will not happen again."

Referring to Jordan's relations with the Palestinians, King Hussein said: "We have recognised the Palestine Liberation Organisation as the sole and legitimate representative of the Palestinian people, and we have recognised its leader, brother Yasser Arafat, as the head of the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) which



came as a result of years-long negotiations. During the negotiations, we have been following this policy and have been working on a solid common ground marked by mutual respect for our Palestinian brethren."

King Hussein said: "Our march in this country has

always been based on the message of the Great Arab Revolt and we have vowed to remain true to these principles. We have also pledged to our Palestinian brothers to stand by their side, as we did with the other Arab brothers in their struggle to achieve their aspirations on their national soil. We are start-

ing to feel that Arab countries and the international community have started to support the Palestinians' rights and proposals that would give momentum to the peace process on the Palestinian-Israeli track."

With reference to the peace process, the King said: "I have sent your government a message on Dec. 4, 1997, explaining the main outlines of our policy towards the peace process and our continued efforts to pursue its course towards achieving a just and comprehensive settlement based on the exchange of land for peace. In my letter, I have pointed out that our relations with the Palestinian National Authority is based on giving them all possible support by deeds rather than words, until they achieve their legitimate rights on their national soil. I also pointed out that vital common interests bind us with our brothers in the final status negotiations, and therefore, we should closely coordinate our position and we should continually be committed to exchange views with them in order to achieve the aspired goals and arrive at full peace. What is more important and valuable — which we must protect and enhance — is our mutual confidence, which must be pure and clear."

Referring to his recent visit to Washington last month and his talks with President Clinton and U.S. officials, the King

said: "From these talks we became aware that the U.S. administration has created integrated ideas to stimulate the peace process on the Palestinian-Israeli track. I immediately contacted President Arafat and met senior Palestinian leaders to convey to them these ideas, and I have also followed up contacts with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and senior Egyptian officials and others from friendly countries in order to make them respond in a responsible manner to the American ideas. I have received a rational and mature response from President Arafat, and despite the fact that the American proposals do not reach the level that can achieve all aspirations, these ideas can give impetus to the peace process and make a major step towards achieving peace. I have also contacted the Israeli leadership and the other political groups in Israel and realise their concern for security. The courageous, responsible Palestinian stand was met with appreciation on the part of the Arabs, the world community and peace-loving Israelis as well as the U.S. administration and the European governments."

King Hussein added: "In reaffirming our clear stand, we consider the Palestinian National Authority and its leader President Yasser Arafat as the sole legitimate authority in Palestine which enjoys our support, and we consider any

harm directed at the Palestinian National Authority as being directed against us, the Jordanian state and the country's institutions. Our Constitution requires from all who inhabit this country and this land to respect our Arab norms and respect our relations with Arab brothers in every way, and this is a constitutional responsibility which we cannot overlook or disregard. I will never allow this country to deviate from the course and the commitment of being a unifying force of Arab ranks and not an element of division."

In conclusion, the King said: "The road to peace is long and difficult and requires from all of us to possess sound thinking, clear vision and courageous heart as well as relentless efforts. We will dedicate our determination and resolve to work with our Arab brothers in general and the Palestinians in particular, until the independent Palestinian state has been established on Palestinian soil with its capital in Jerusalem, and until the break of the dawn of construction for the peoples of the region which has suffered for long from wars and destruction. We have inherited a humanitarian mission calling for justice and equality and the love of peace, security and cooperation. We pledge to respect this commitment and pursue efforts for the fulfillment of our dream."

## Princess Sarvath patronises campaign 4-year-old Iraqi child with leukaemia arrives in Amman on way to London

By Tareq Ayyoub  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A four-year-old Iraqi girl arrived here on Wednesday en route to London for treatment for leukaemia as part of a humanitarian mission lead by British MP George Galloway.

Jordan News Agency, Petra, said that the office of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan extended its support to insure the success of the mission.

Mr. Galloway told reporters upon his arrival at Marka Airport from Baghdad that Mariam Hamza will be "the ambassador" of all Iraqis who are still suffering under the seven-year-old sanctions.

"I know that Mariam will light a candle which will eliminate the terrible picture that she has left behind," Mr. Galloway said following his arrival on a Jordanian chartered plane from the Iraqi capital.

"Iraq is a dark place now. The hospitals are dark places but nobody wants to visit. The sickness, the diarrhoea, all the diseases are every way. Even the hospitals are not clean because the sanctions did not exempt detergents which are badly needed," the British MP told reporters.

"We have just been informed that Her Royal Highness Princess Sarvath the wife of [His Royal Highness] Crown Prince has agreed to be the patron of the Mariam Appeal," Mr. Galloway said.

"Under her patronage I am sure we will be able to raise the money not only to pay for her treatment but to send cancer drugs and other cancer equipment back to the hospitals in Iraq to treat the children that Mariam has left behind," Mr. Galloway said.

The child, whose body has been reduced to skin and bones, was to spend the night in Amman before being flown to Glasgow, Scotland, on Thursday for treatment at a children hospital, according to Mr. Galloway.

The MP, a member of the ruling Labour Party, who has pressed for a lifting of sanctions in force since Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, has said his mission was purely humanitarian.

The British government on Tuesday welcomed the granting of an exemption to the sanctions to allow the child to fly out rather than face the long overland drive from Baghdad to Amman.

Mr. Galloway has been in Baghdad since last Thursday and campaigned on Mariam's behalf for several weeks, denouncing the impact of sanctions on Iraqi children.

According to aid agencies, a third of all Iraqi children under the age of five are suffering from chronic malnutrition. Iraq



Mariam Hamza, four-year-old Iraqi girl suffering from leukaemia, sitting on the lap of her grandmother Umm Hadi upon their arrival in Amman on Wednesday from Baghdad (Photo by Yousef Allam)

has held several mass funerals of dozens of children in the past.

Mr. Galloway said that during the 1991 Gulf war, 927,000 rounds of uranium-tipped bullets and 30,000 tank shells tipped with uranium were fired at the area around Mariam's village, 150 kilometres north of Kuwait.

"I only left the hospital this morning. And what broke my heart was that parents were cheering us all our way even those whose children were left

behind to suffer per chance they die. But they were wishing us good luck and asking us to speak about their children's plight. We have a great responsibility for those left behind and we are aware of that," Mr. Galloway said.

In a similar mercy operation, a five-year-old who was evacuated to the Netherlands in late December after an appeal from a CNN reporter, died in Amsterdam hospital on March 2.

## Shbeilat released on bail

By Rana Hussein  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Former president of the Engineers Association, Leith Shbeilat, was released Wednesday on bail after six weeks in detention on charges of sparking violence in Ma'an in February.

Mr. Shbeilat, who was released on a JD 2,000 bail, is being tried at the State Security Court on charges of "instigating riots." The next court session is scheduled for Saturday.

His release was approved by the Court of Cassation which on Tuesday overruled an April 4 State Security Court ruling denying Mr. Shbeilat bail.

Mr. Shbeilat, an opposition leader, was arrested on Feb. 19, after returning from Ma'an. Hours later, pro-Iraqi unrest swept the city leaving one Jordanian dead and over 25 injured. The government which imposed a curfew on Ma'an blamed Mr. Shbeilat for inciting the riots.

Tens of people who were arrested on charges of involvement in the riots were released in the past weeks.

If convicted, Mr. Shbeilat could face a maximum of four months imprisonment. Mr. Shbeilat was pardoned twice by His Majesty King Hussein in 1992 and 1996 after receiving prison terms ranging from three years to life imprisonment on charges of treason and lese majeste.

## Assad: Israel must unconditionally withdraw

CAIRO (AFP) — Visiting Syrian President Hafez Assad said on Wednesday that Israel must unconditionally withdraw its troops from south Lebanon.

"Now they [the Israelis] say they want to withdraw. That's good and the Lebanese accept that, provided it involves a detailed implementation of the resolution," he said referring to the 1978 U.N. Resolution 425 calling for an immediate withdrawal.

"Resolution 425 does not require any agreement or commitment" for it to be carried out, Mr. Assad said at a joint press conference with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

"The Israelis must leave in the same way they arrived. I think that's also the Lebanese point of view," he said.

Israel earlier this month offered to withdraw from south Lebanon, where it maintains a buffer zone, provided Beirut guarantees security on the border region.

Mr. Assad also rejected any link between an Israeli withdrawal from south Lebanon and the possible withdrawal of the estimated 35,000 Syrian troops stationed on 75 per cent of Lebanese soil.

"There is no link between the two issues," he said.

"The Lebanese asked Syria, its nearest Arab neighbour, to intervene to extinguish the fire" of the 1975-1990 Lebanese civil war, said Mr. Assad.

"It was not us who wanted to enter Lebanon and if we did so it was because of pressure from our Lebanese brothers," he said.

Mr. Mubarak agreed "the Syrian presence in Lebanon is part of an agreement between the two countries, while the Israeli presence is simply an occupation."

He added that the Israelis "entered Lebanon without permission and must also leave the country without permission, that's the solution."

## Husseini questioned by Israeli police

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israeli police questioned on Wednesday the highest Palestinian official in Jerusalem over the arrest of one of his bodyguards for illegal possession of a gun.

"They asked me if I had any information on this man. I said no and I made clear that I have issued orders barring my employees from carrying weapons," Faisal Husseini told Israel Radio.

Police said Mr. Husseini, who heads the Palestine Liberation Organisation's offices in occupied Arab east Jerusalem, was questioned for

a half hour about his bodyguard, Amjad Raouf, who was arrested Monday after police had tracked him for several weeks.

Police found on Mr. Raouf a gun and bullets, which they said he admitted to receiving from Mr. Husseini's house. He was remanded into custody for eight days.

Police said Mr. Raouf told his interrogators he used the gun in his work as a mediator of disputes in the Old City with Orient House, the Palestinian headquarters in Arab east Jerusalem, the radio said.



## British Lockerbie families seek Arab League help to push for trial

CAIRO (AFP) — Relatives of British victims of the Lockerbie bombing sought help from the Arab League on Wednesday to push for an urgent and fair trial for the two Libyan suspects.

"We feel that the Arab League has shown itself to be interested in the same thing as we are, namely truth and justice over Lockerbie," said Jim Swire, spokesman for the victims' families.

"We, as a group of U.K. relatives, are not interested in politics. We believe that the truth can best be arrived at through a fair criminal court being set up to try the accused," he told reporters after meeting Arab

League chief Esmat Abdul Meguid.

Mr. Swire lost his daughter in the 1988 bombing of a Pan Am jet over Lockerbie, Scotland, in which 270 people were killed.

The U.N. Security Council imposed a ban on flights and arms deals with Libya in 1992 to press it to hand over two nationals suspected of involvement in the bombing for trial in Scotland or the United States.

The Arab League along with the Organisation for African Unity backs a Libyan request for the suspects to be tried under Scottish law at the International Court of Justice in The Hague.

The court in February declared itself competent to hear the case and the League called for the sanctions against Libya to be lifted pending its judgement.

Scottish law professor Robert Black, also visiting with Swire, has proposed a hearing in a neutral country under Scottish law before an international panel of judges rather than a jury.

The idea of a neutral hearing has divided the victim's families — representatives of the families of the 35 British victims have said they are ready to accept the Libyan plan, but those of the 189 U.S. victims still insist the two Libyans

must face a U.S. or Scottish trial.

Mr. Swire said British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook had told representatives of the British families at a meeting on April 8 that the government was considering some "diplomatic initiatives."

"I have no idea what is in the mind of the British government... We were not presented with a plan of action but we were told that no avenue has been barred," Mr. Swire said.

"The British government told us that they will consider options for getting rid of the deadlock, but it didn't appear to us to have a coherent plan in order to do that," he added.

## Palestinian National Authority arrests Hamas student leaders

GAZA CITY (AP) — Palestinian police detained four Islamic University students who organised a rally critical of the Palestinian National Authority, a Hamas official said Wednesday.

The four are leaders of the youth movement of the militant Islamist group Hamas, the official said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Police confirmed that the students had been detained, but said they could not give further details while they were being questioned.

Dozens of Hamas activists, including several senior leaders, have been arrested in the

West Bank and Gaza Strip since the March 29 death of Mohiyedine Sharif, the chief bomb maker for Hamas.

The Palestinian National Authority (PNA) has said Sharif was killed by an associate in a fight over money and position. Hamas has disputed the findings and accused Israel and the PNA of complicity in Sharif's death.

The students detained Tuesday night include Iman Taha, head of Islamic University's student council.

Also Wednesday, about 400 Palestinians held a march to launch a campaign for the release of Palestinian prisoners

in Israeli jails.

The marchers, who carried Palestinian flags and pictures of prisoners, included mothers and other relatives of the prisoners. "Bibi, release our sons," some shouted, referring to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

The campaign hopes to gather 1 million signatures by May 14 — the 50th anniversary of the founding of Israel according to the western calendar — and to send the signatures to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan, U.S. President Bill Clinton and other world leaders, asking them to put pressure on Israel to release the prisoners.

## Israeli army challenges acquittal of Lebanese guerrilla suspect

LOD (AFP) — The Israeli army prosecutor lodged an appeal Wednesday against the acquittal by a military court of a Lebanese man accused of involvement in attacks on Israel from south Lebanon.

A military appeals court in Lod was hearing the appeal Wednesday, a military spokesman said.

Ali Ahmad Benjak, 21, was arrested in south Lebanon two years ago for alleged membership in the Shiite militia Hizbollah and for firing Katyusha rockets on Israel during widespread fighting in April 1996.

The military tribunal acquitted him on Monday, citing reasonable doubt about the charges against him.

Israeli press reports said the judges suspected that a confession by the defendant submitted by investigators may have been forged.

The tribunal ordered Mr. Benjak freed and returned to Lebanon within 48 hours but his release was held up by the prosecutor's appeal.

The Iranian-backed Hizbollah leads guerrilla efforts to expel Israel from the "security zone" it occupies in south Lebanon to protect its northern communities from cross-border attacks.



PETITION FOR PRISONER RELEASE: A Palestinian policeman in Gaza City Wednesday signs his name to a petition demanding the release of Palestinian prisoners from Israeli jails. A rally in Gaza City's Palestine Square kicked off the effort to garner one million signatures to the petition, which organisers hope to send to U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan (AFP photo)

## British U.N. troops barred from Cyprus resort after tourist attack

AYIA NAPA (R) — The U.N. force in Cyprus has banned its British members from a resort on the island after allegations that one of them attacked a tourist, a spokesman said on Wednesday.

The force commander decided yesterday that Ayia Napa is out of bounds for the British battalion serving with the United Nations peacekeeping force in Cyprus.

U.N. spokesman Waldemar Rokozewski told Reuters.

Military police are questioning a British soldier after allegations that he attacked British tourist Jeremy Caprio, 35, from Wiltshire in Cheshire, blinding him in one eye and breaking his nose, in the southeastern resort of Ayia Napa.

In 1994, the British bases on Cyprus banned visits to Ayia Napa after the arrest of three soldiers for the brutal death of

Danish tour guide Louise Jensen, 23. The soldiers are serving life sentences for manslaughter at Nicosia central prison.

Similar restrictions were imposed last year when British tourists were attacked by off-duty soldiers, one of whom was fined \$1,420 for assault. Some 3,500 soldiers are stationed on the British bases.

Mr. Caprio, a computer technician, said Tuesday's attack by a group of assailants was unprovoked.

"I was trying to keep three of them off of me. A friend of mine said there were at least four or five," said Mr. Caprio, talking to reporters from his hospital bed in Ayia Napa.

"Once I got hit I can remember very little. There was a boot coming into my face... the next thing I know I woke up here," he said.

Doctors say it is unlikely that Mr. Caprio will be able to see with his right eye again.

"I am still hoping that when I go back to England they can do something... if they can't I've still got another one," he said, adding that he had been to Cyprus at least 10 times and the incident would not put him off coming again.

"I am not too happy about the soldiers being here. I know Cypriot friends who own bars and they are not too happy about it either," he said.

Britain contributes almost 400 troops to the 1,265-member U.N. peacekeeping force, deployed to police the so-called "green line" separating the divided island's Greek and Turkish Cypriots.

The British contingent in the U.N. force has previously been free of any controversy over the behaviour of its members.

## U.S. envoy Miller due back in Cyprus

NICOSIA (AFP) — Thomas Miller, the U.S. State Department coordinator on Cyprus, is due to visit the divided island within the next week for talks with leaders of both communities, a U.S. embassy spokesman said Wednesday.

Mr. Miller, who was last here earlier this month, will visit "at the end of this week or early next week," the official said, adding that details of his schedule would not be available until Thursday.

The Turkish-Cypriot news agency TAK said Mr. Miller would arrive in Cyprus at the weekend and hold talks on

Monday with Rauf Denktaş, leader of the breakaway Turkish-Cypriot state on the north of the Mediterranean island.

Mr. Miller's trip comes ahead of the arrival next month of U.S. presidential envoy for Cyprus Richard Holbrooke in a bid to find a solution to the 24-year division of the island.

It will be Mr. Holbrooke's third visit to the island since U.S. President Bill Clinton named him as special Cyprus envoy in July 1997.

Mr. Holbrooke warned as he wrapped up his last visit

here 10 days ago that the United States would reconsider its role in helping solve the Cyprus issue if his mission in May failed to achieve any progress.

Talks on the future of the island have been at an impasse largely over the European Union's decision to open membership talks with the internationally recognised Greek-Cypriot government.

Cyprus has been divided since Turkish troops occupied the north in 1974 in response to a coup in Nicosia aimed at uniting the island with Greece.

## Senior Japanese official to visit Iran

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese Vice Foreign Minister Masahiko Komura is to visit Iran to meet Iranian President Mohammad Khatami after a trip to Thailand this weekend, ministry officials said Wednesday.

Mr. Komura would travel to Tehran after staying in Bangkok from Saturday to Monday for an international meeting to discuss elections in Cambodia due in July and a regional U.N. ministerial gathering, the official said.

It was not clear whether he would travel directly from Thailand to Iran, however, and an exact date for the visit had yet to be set, the foreign ministry official said.

Iran's ambassador to Japan, Manouchehr Motaki met Mr. Komura earlier in the day and said he hoped the two countries would improve ties during his visit to Tehran, the official said.

Japan resumed high-level talks with Iran last November after a seven-month suspension due to a court ruling that implicated Iranian leaders in the 1992 murder of four Kurds.

## Mysterious beast sparks panic in Egypt after mauling 13

CAIRO (AFP) — A mysterious beast believed to be half-wolf has sparked panic in a town in Egypt's northern Delta region after mauling a dozen residents, several of them children.

Dubbed "Salwa" or she-wolf, the animal appeared in the streets of Zagazig on Tuesday, biting and injuring 13 men, women and children before fleeing. Al Akhbar newspaper reported on Wednesday. Police gave chase but without success.

Witnesses quoted by the press say the beast is bigger than a dog, with pale brown fur, large fangs, a long snout and a wolf's tail.

During late 1996 and early last year, a similar beast was blamed for a series of attacks in Cairo and southern Egypt which killed at least four people and injured dozens of others before it suddenly disappeared.

## Famine threatens government-held district in south Sudan

KHARTOUM (AFP) — A district in war-torn southern Sudan's Al Buhayrat state is threatened with famine, governor Nicanora Mager was quoted Wednesday as saying.

Nicanora Mager warned of "the existence of a famine threat due to an acute shortage in food and medicine" in Aliah district, in the state's Yirrol province, press reports said.

"The people in Aliah district are in urgent need of food, medicine and clothing," Mr. Mager said, adding that his state government had managed to provide 100,000 kilograms of sorghum.

The papers said First Vice President Ali Osman Mohammed Taha had ordered an immediate shipment of aid to Aliah.

The district is under government control, while other parts of Al Buhayrat state,

## Peace talks to resume in April in Nairobi

NAIROBI (AFP) — Peace negotiations between the Khartoum government and southern Sudanese rebels will resume in Nairobi during the last week of April, the Kenyan foreign ministry said Wednesday. The talks, which broke off in November, are aimed at ending 14 years of civil war blamed for at least one million deaths including many by disease and famine in Africa's largest country.

In early November delegations representing the military government of Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir and the Sudan People's Liberation Army met for 10 days in the Kenyan capital under the auspices of the regional Inter-Governmental Authority on Development. The two sides were meeting then for the first time in three years.

including its capital Rumbek, are held by the rebel Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA).

Referring to the 15-year-old uprising in which the mainly Christian and animist SPLA has been fighting domination by the Muslim, Arabised north, Mager was quoted as saying: "The state government is determined to liberate

the state from the rebellion."

Meanwhile, army spokesman Abdul Rahman Siral Khetim was quoted as saying that "heavy casualties" had been inflicted on the rebels in "extensive mopping-up operations conducted in the past two days by government troops in the Bahr al Ghazal region" — which includes Al Buhayrat.

### JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

Thursday Programmes

14:10 Cartoon — The Adventures of Dinky Di's

14:30 Doc. — The Animal Park

15:00 French Programmes

17:00 NBA

18:00 Drama — The Burned Bridge

19:00 Le Journal

19:15 Science Magazine — A

Tommy Crochus

19:30 News Headlines

19:35 Comedy — Big Brother

20:00 Drama — The Great

Romances

20:30 Drama — Dr. Quinn, the

Medicine Woman

21:10 The Oprah Winfrey Show

22:00 News in English

22:30 Feature film — "Promise

the Moon"

23:59 Comedy — Never The

Taiwan

00:30 End of T.X.

Friday Programmes

14:10 Cartoon — The Adventures

of Teddy Ruxpin

14:30 Wishbone

15:00 French Programmes

17:00 He Shoots, He Scores

17:30 Doc. — Blue Water

Dreaming

18:10 Tarzan

19:00 Le Journal

19:15 Educational Programme

— Allo La Terra

19:30 News Headlines

19:35 Comedy — "The

Fresh Prince of Bel-Air"

20:00 Documentary — Life on

the Internet

20:30 The Elton Show

21:10 Drama — "Baby-S"

## JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

22:00 News in English  
22:30 Mini-series: "Maria  
Chapdelaine (Pt. II)"  
23:10 Comedy — The Nanny  
23:30 End of T.X.

### PRAYER TIMES

04:41 Fajr  
06:02 Sunrise  
12:35 Dhuhr  
16:12 Asr  
19:09 Maghreb  
20:30 Isha

### CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church  
Swetfeth. Tel. 5920740  
Assemblies of God Church Tel.  
4632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 4624590  
Terra Sancta Church Tel.  
4623666

Anglican Church Tel.  
4624853/4624811  
St. Afrem Syrian Orthodox  
Church Tel. 771751

Amman International Church  
Tel. 865897  
German-speaking Evangelical  
Congregation Tel. 5688404

The Evangelical Local Church  
in Amman Tel. 811295  
Church of Jesus Christ of Lat-  
ter Day Saints Tel. 4654932

St. John the Baptist at De la  
Salle College Tel. 5661757  
Church of the Annunciation  
Tel. 4637440  
Greek Orthodox Church Tel.  
4646138

Church of Presentation, Swe-  
feth Tel. 5920146  
The United Catholic Church  
Tel. 4624757

The English-Language  
Catholic Parish Tel. 4614190  
Evangelical Free Church Tel.  
892679

The Baptist Church Tel.  
4628052  
The Armenian Catholic  
Church 771331

### WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Depart-  
ment of Meteorology  
The effect of the heat wave  
will last until Thursday after-  
noon whereby it will be hot and  
dry, clouds appearing at  
different altitudes, and winds  
southeasterly moderate to  
active. On Friday, tempera-  
tures will drop, humidity rise,  
and winds westerly moderate.

In Aqaba, it will be hot, dry,  
and dusty, winds southerly  
moderate and seas rough later  
becoming northerly moderate  
and seas calm.

Amman 21/32  
Aqaba 27/39  
Deserts 19/34  
Jordan Valley 23/37

Yesterday's high temperatures:  
Amman 35, Aqaba 40  
Humidity readings: Amman  
23 per cent, Aqaba 21 per  
cent.

### USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY  
AMMAN:  
Dr. Issam Asmar 890504  
Dr. Osama Al Hussein 847289  
Dr. Nabil As'ad 751872  
Dr. Abdul Rahman Mustafa 744885  
Firas pharmacy 5661912  
Ferdous pharmacy 773836  
Al Asema pharmacy 4637055  
Naiorouk pharmacy 4623672  
Al Salam pharmacy 4636730  
Yacoub pharmacy 4644945  
Shmeisani pharmacy 4637660  
Najib pharmacy 847652

IRBID:  
Dr. Ghazi Tar'ameh 250800  
Al Quds pharmacy (—)  
ZARQA:  
Dr. Randa Shahin 995170  
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES  
Food Control Centre 4637111  
Civil Defence Department 5661111  
Civil Defence Immediate Res-  
cue 4630341  
Civil Defence Emergency 199  
Rescue Police 192 4621111, 4637777  
Fire Brigade 4671701  
Blood Bank 775121  
Highway Police 843402  
Traffic Police 896390  
Public Security Dept. 4630321  
Hotel Complaints 5605800  
Price Complaints 5661176  
Water & Sewage Complaints 897467  
Amman Municipality Com-  
plaints 787111  
Telephone Information (directo-

ry assistance) 121  
Overseas Calls 010230  
Central Amman Telephone  
Repairs 463101  
Abdali Tel. Repairs 5661101  
Jordan Television 773111  
Radio Jordan 774111  
Water Authority 5680100  
J. Electricity Authority 5815615  
Electric Power Co. 4636381  
RJ Flight Information 44-53200  
Queen Alia Int. Airport 44-53200

HOSPITALS  
AMMAN:  
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special  
Surgery 5921199  
The Islamic Abdi 56661317  
Al-Khaleel Maternity 4642441/2  
Jabal Amman Maternity 4642362  
Maulhas, J. Amman 4636140  
Palestine Shmeisani 5607071  
Shmeisani Hospital 5669131  
University Hospital 5353444  
Al-Muasher Hospital 5667279  
Al-Ahli, Abdali 56641646  
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 7710105  
Al-Bashir 77511126  
Army, Marka 391611/15  
Queen Alia Hospital 560224050  
Amal Hospital 5674155

ZARQA:  
Zarqa Govt. Hospital  
(09)983323  
Zarqa National Hospital  
(09)900560  
Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732  
Al Hikma Modern Hospital

IRBID:  
Princess Basma Hospital  
Greek Catholic Hospital  
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital  
AQABA:  
Princess Haya Hospital  
(03)514111

FOR THE TRAVELLER  
QUEEN ALIA  
INTERNATIONAL  
AIRPORT  
This information is supplied by  
Royal Jordanian (RJ) informa-  
tion department at the Queen  
Alia International Airport Tel.  
(44)53200 where it should  
always be verified.  
Information on other flights are  
supplied on phone 44 (52700) or  
44 (53250).

ARRIVALS  
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
07:45 Santa (RJ)  
09:30 Jeddah (RJ)  
09:40 Beirut (RJ)  
10:00 New Delhi (RJ)  
10:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)  
10:05 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)  
10:20 Bombay (RJ)  
10:40 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)  
10:50 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)  
11:20 Colombo (RJ)  
11:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)  
15:35 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)  
16:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

18:45 Kuwait (RJ)  
19:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)  
19:10 Athens (RJ)  
19:55 Bangkok, Calcutta (RJ)  
19:55 London, Athens (RJ)  
20:00 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)  
21:20 Moscow (RJ)  
21:55 Larnaca (RJ)  
02:35 Riyadh (add) (RJ)  
04:15 Moscow (add) (RJ)

Other Flights  
13:00 Riyadh (SV)  
14:10 Muscat, Abu Dhabi (GF)  
15:10 Sharjah (AH)  
15:40 Doha (QR)  
16:00 Dubai (EK)  
19:00 Paris (AF)  
20:25 Tel Aviv (LY)  
21:10 London (BA)  
21:10 Beirut (ME)  
21:40 Cairo (MS)  
23:20 Istanbul (TK)  
23:35 Larnaca (CY)  
01:15 Amsterdam, Beirut (KL)  
03:00 Rome (AZ)

Royal Wings (RW)  
(For Thursday and Friday)  
08:45 Aqaba (RW)  
10:05 Amman (QAIA) (RW)  
10:50 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)  
18:20 Tel Aviv (RW)  
19:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)  
22:20 Aqaba (RW)  
23:50 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)

DEPARTURES  
Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights  
06:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)  
06:30 Beirut (RJ)  
11:25 Abu Dhabi, Al Ain (RJ)

11:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)  
12:15 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)  
12:20 Amsterdam, Chicago (RJ)  
12:45 Kuwait (RJ)  
13:00 Paris (RJ)  
13:20 London (RJ)  
13:20 Athens (RJ)  
13:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)  
18:15 Moscow (add) (RJ)  
20:35 Larnaca (RJ)  
21:10 Cairo (RJ)  
21:20 Jeddah (RJ)  
21:45 Riyadh (add) (RJ)  
22:30 Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta (RJ)  
02:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)  
05:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights  
06:15 Istanbul (TK)  
07:00 Frankfurt (LH)  
08:20 London (BA)  
08:45 Beirut (ME)  
14:30 Riyadh (SV)  
15:00 Abu Dhabi (GF)  
16:00 Annabah, Algiers (AH)  
16:30 Doha (QR)  
17:00 Damascus, Dubai (EK)  
21:10 Tel Aviv (LY)  
22:40 Cairo (MS)  
02:15 Amsterdam (KL)  
04:00 Rome (AZ)

Royal Wings  
(For Thursday and Friday)  
07:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)  
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10:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)  
17:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)  
18:55 Tel Aviv (RW)  
21:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)  
22:50 Aqaba (RW)

EXHIBITIONS  
The Jordanian National  
Museum, Amman  
The Jordanian National



## Cabinet approves \$1.15m EU grant for medical equipment

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers has approved a nearly \$1.15 million grant from the European Union to Jordan to help finance the purchase of medical equipment for the Palestinian refugee camps in Jerash and Baqa'a and for the Shalaleh district of Aqaba.

During a regular session on Tuesday, the Cabinet also approved the formation of a committee to prepare for the Jordanian-Tunisian Higher Committee meeting in Tunis. The preparatory committee will convene in Tunis on April 19-20. Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Ham Mulki will head the team to the preparatory meeting.

The Jordanian side to the higher committee meeting, which will be co-chaired by Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and his Tunisian counterpart, groups the ministers of foreign affairs, culture and youth, municipal and rural affairs and the environment, industry, trade and supply, and administrative development.

The Council of Ministers formed a delegation to take part in the fourth conference on bio-diversity, which will be held in Slovakia in early May. Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Tawfiq Kreishan will lead the delegation.

The Cabinet formed a delegation led by Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Mohammad Saleh Horani to take part in the Arab energy meeting, to be held in Damascus on May 10 under the auspices of the Arab League and the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting Countries to discuss coordination among Arab countries in energy-related fields.

At the session, the Council formed a delegation led by the director general of the Civil Aviation Authority to attend a meeting by the Arab Air Transport Federation in Tunis later this month. A delegation, led by Ibrahim Badran, director general of the Palestinian Affairs Department, was assembled to attend a meeting on refugees to be held in Canada from April 19-21.

The Council of Ministers formed a delegation led by Waleed Sadi to attend a diplomatic conference in Rome on the formation of an international criminal court. The meeting will take place from June 15-17.



PRINCESS RAHMA ATTENDS GRADUATION CEREMONY. HRH Princess Rahma on Wednesday attends the graduation ceremony of the participants in training programmes organised by the Jordanian Women's Union/Balqa branch. The ceremony took place at St. George's Society in Salt (Petra photo)

## Opposition urges PNA to stop crackdown on Hamas leaders

By Tareq Ayyoub  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A senior Islamist leader Wednesday urged the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to stop cracking down on the Islamic Resistance Movement, Hamas, following the assassination of a top group member in the West Bank.

Hamam Sa'id, deputy secretary general of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) party, also warned the PNA against "any attempt to liquidate Hamas' military arm, Izzeddine Qasbi."

Dr. Sa'id, who was speaking at a press conference by the coalition of 12 opposition parties, was commenting on the dispute between Hamas and the PNA which erupted following the killing of Hamas' top bomb maker, Moheddine Sharif, on March 29.

The PNA said the killing of Sharif was carried out by Hamas members and launched a crack down against the group's activists in the West

Bank and the Gaza Strip.

Hamas rejected the charges and called upon the PNA to release all Hamas detainees.

"The wide-ranging Islamic movement will not remain silent on the liquidation of Hamas and considers this matter a red line that should not be crossed," Dr. Sa'id, also a former deputy, said.

"Any case that could lead to an internal feud among the Palestinian people will not only have an impact on the Palestinians but also the outside world," he added.

"Everyone that helps put an end to the jihad [struggle] of the Palestinian people will be held accountable for his actions," the IAF spokesman said.

The secretary general of the Jordan People's Democratic Party (HASHD), Salim Nahhas, said Jordanian parties were ready to mediate between the PNA and Hamas.

"What concerns us most is putting an end to the tension between the two sides and stopping a possible confrontation," Mr. Nahhas said.

"We are ready to mediate between the two sides if asked by one of the two concerned parties," Mr. Nahhas added.

A member of the coalition, Deputy Mohammad Oran, criticised the PNA crackdown against Hamas, which he said "is nothing but a concession to Israeli and American pressures."

"We warn the PNA against continuing its campaign to liquidate the nationalist... forces in an attempt to put out the flame of resistance among the Palestinian people," Dr. Oran added.

"We call for establishing an independent investigation committee that would look for those responsible for the assassination of the martyr Sharif," the deputy, who represents the Arab Land Party, said.

The opposition parties sent appeals to Palestinian President Yasser Arafat and Arab League Secretary General Esmat Meguid to help defuse the tension between the two sides.

### New Indian ambassador presents credentials

AMMAN (Petra) — Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Jawad Anani on Wednesday received the credentials of the new Indian ambassador to Jordan, Sha-

### NEWS IN BRIEF

ran Singh.

Education minister asks committee to prepare for next school year

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister

of Education and Higher Education Mohammad Hamdan on Wednesday presided over a meeting of the ministry's planning committee. During the meeting, Dr. Hamdan stressed the need for taking all required preparations for the coming 1998-1999 school year.

## Israel to construct new passenger terminal at Aqaba international airport

By Alla A. Toukan  
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Israel will build a new terminal for passengers bound for Eilat at Jordan's Aqaba International Airport, currently used by both states as stipulated under the 1994 peace treaty, officials said Wednesday.

The new passenger terminal, to be built on the Israeli side of the border, will be financed by Israel to facilitate extra traffic at the Aqaba airport, director general of the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), Capt. Jasser Ziyad, told the Jordan Times.

The new plan envisages

using the Aqaba runway for all incoming flights, the terminal currently in use on the Jordanian side of the border for passengers bound for the Kingdom, and the new terminal, four kilometres away from the runway, for passengers going to the Jewish state.

Israeli Embassy spokesperson Ro'ey Gilad said Israel expects half a million passengers annually to pass through the new terminal, which is expected to be finished in one year.

The joint use of Aqaba International Airport is a pilot project launched last September, initially for a trial period of

four months.

Capt. Ziyad said Jordan has requested that the trial period be extended.

Currently the Aqaba airport receives three Israeli carrier flights from Europe a week. Mr. Gilad said Israel's \$10 million investment was testimony to the success of the pilot project.

The project ran into difficulties last month when Jordan complained that Israel was not sticking to its side of the bargain by not upping the three weekly flights to 15-25 as stipulated in the September agreement.

In reply, Israel reiterated its

commitment to the project and vowed to increase the number of flights, although a specific number was never set.

Describing the new plan as an "interim solution and a step towards building the joint peace airport," Capt. Ziyad said he expected that the Aqaba airport will witness an upsurge in the number of inbound flights after Israel's proposed terminal is completed.

Capt. Ziyad added that Israel will have sole jurisdiction over the terminal as well as its own security, since it will be on Israeli soil.

## ICRC, Red Crescent open orientation meeting

AMMAN (Petra) — The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Jordanian National Red Crescent Society (JNRCS) Wednesday opened a two-day meeting in Amman to orient JNRCS workers on international humanitarian law.

A total of 70 JNRCS workers in the Kingdom along with representatives of a number of schools are taking part in the meeting, which was opened by JNRCS President Mohammad Hadid.

In his opening address, Dr. Hadid reviewed JNRCS achievements, noting in particular the recent expansion of the Red Crescent Hospital, the creation of a vocational training centre that offers free training to up to 400 women annually, and first aid training for members of the local community.

He said the JNRCS will celebrate its 50th anniversary this year under Royal patronage, and several veteran society workers will be honoured. The head of the ICRC delegation in Jordan, Jacques de Maio, reviewed scopes of cooperation between the ICRC and the JNRCS, noting that special emphasis is being placed on the role which the youth can play in voluntary and humanitarian fields.

## Prosecution asks court to uphold man's death sentence

By Rana Hussein  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Prosecutor Zuhair Ariyat has asked the Criminal Court to uphold the death sentence handed down to a 52-year-old man, convicted last year for the 1989 murder of his wife, following a higher court's request to reconsider the original sentence.

Ahmad Ali was sentenced to death by the Criminal Court on Dec. 8, 1997, after he was found guilty of the premeditated murder of his wife.

Mr. Ali told interrogators that he plotted to kill his wife after seeing a man leave his house late at night in 1989 upon returning home from a party.

"Ahmad claimed that his wife, the mother of nine,

man leaving his house late at night."

However, the Criminal Court then rejected his pleas of cleansing his honour and sentenced him to death.

But last month, the Court of Cassation returned the case to the Criminal Court asking it to "reconsider the defendant's accusations and determine if he should benefit from a reduction in penalty."

The defendant was arrested by police in August after a man discovered Ms. Hassan's remains in the cave.

Mr. Ali told interrogators that he plotted to kill his wife after seeing a man leave his house late at night in 1989 upon returning home from a party.

"Ahmad claimed that his wife, the mother of nine,

denied having relations with anyone, but he did not believe her and plotted to kill her," according to court papers.

On the evening of the incident, it maintained, the defendant lured his wife to a deserted cave, shot her twice in the back and buried her in the cave, the court said.

The following morning, the court added, the defendant asked his children about his wife's whereabouts, then went and placed a missing person ad in the newspaper.

Two months later, the defendant married another woman, the court stated.

The court tribunal, headed by Judge Jihad Khasawneh and including Justices Yassin Abdullah and Ahmad Khanb, postponed the trial to April 28 to issue a verdict.

## ILO official, ministry review cooperation

AMMAN (Petra) — The assistant director general of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), Ibrahim Sous, conferred in Amman Wednesday with Minister of Labour Mohammad Farhan and reviewed the organisation's activities in the Arab World and ILO-Jordanian cooperation.

Ministry Secretary General Saleh Tarawneh and a number of ministry officials presented ideas on the prospects of boosting ILO-Jordanian cooperation, particularly in the fields of training, labour dispute settlement

and labour-related inspection operations.

The two sides also discussed the possibility of the ILO providing Jordan with funding needed for developing a ministry system on collecting labour-related information, ensuring occupational health and educating the labour force.

Dr. Sous said the ILO has no funds to offer the Kingdom but added that the organisation was ready to cooperate with Jordan in conducting labour-related feasibility studies and assisting the country in securing funding

from world organisations.

He expressed hope that Jordan would benefit more from the ILO's plans for the year ending in 2001.

Dr. Sous later met with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Jawad Anani and reviewed ILO-Jordanian cooperation in labour-related fields.

Also Wednesday, Dr. Sous met with the executive director of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF), Sima Bahous, with whom he reviewed the NHF's achievements and plans.

## Muslim Brotherhood continues to expand popular appeal despite setbacks

By Francesca Ciriaci  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Muslim Brotherhood has expanded its base and tightened its grip over civil society institutions despite internal feuds and its decision to boycott last year's general elections, political analysts and government officials said.

In union and university elections held over the last three months, the Islamists and their allies reasserted their total control over three professional associations, including the influential 38,000-strong Jordan Engineers Association (JEA), and dominated student councils at five universities.

"This is a clear indication that the Brotherhood remains the number one and most organised political force and that it is also gaining more popular support," said a senior government official, who requested anonymity.

Rising poverty and unemployment, coupled with the inability of leftist and pan-Arabist parties to grow and the failure of the 1994 Israel-Jordan peace treaty to deliver many of the promised economic dividends, have worked for the country's oldest movement, independent politicians said.

Ongoing traditional rifts between the group's "hawks" and "doves" do not seem to have hindered the Brotherhood's political expansion.

The Islamists won all council seats, the chair and deputy posts in the Jordan Agricultural Engineers Association, the JEA and the Jordan Nurses Association.

Islamists are also tipped to win a comfortable majority in

the upcoming elections of the Pharmacists Association, traditionally a leftist stronghold. In an unexpected development, Islamists and their allies won 75 per cent of the student council seats at Mu'ta University.

The introduction of a one-person, one-vote electoral system at the University of Jordan only partially loosened the hold of the Islamist bloc, which won 51 of the 80 student council seats at the state-run university.

Islamist candidates also secured a majority of council seats in recent elections at Zarqa Private University, Yarmouk University, and Balqa Applied Sciences University.

Analysts said the Brotherhood's popularity increased after the movement refined their political outlook, bringing it more in line with the demands and sentiments of the masses.

The diminishing influence of leftist and nationalist parties, traditional rivals of the Islamists among the opposition, and the government's perceived inflexible and tough policies also played to their advantage.

In addition, the Brotherhood's 53 years of political experience have enabled it to build a network of health, educational and social welfare institutions — parallel to and at times a substitute for state apparatus.

Compared to other parties, fund-raising has never been a major problem, with money coming in from rich supporters, including prominent merchants and from the international Brotherhood movement.

The group was registered in

Jordan as a charitable organisation in 1945, a status that allowed it to escape the 1957-1992 ban on all political parties.

While the Muslim Brothers continued to operate publicly, many of their leftist colleagues went underground or languished for years in jails.

In a country where many people are traditionally conservative Muslims, they were able to penetrate the various

### NEWS ANALYSIS

social echelons.

"They are at every corner and in every school and shop," the government official told the Jordan Times.

The Brotherhood has shown more pragmatism over the last four years, developing its political platform and language to boost its appeal to followers ranging from rich to poor and from illiterate to intellectual.

"Today, the movement is more sophisticated and stronger than ever," said Ibrahim Gharaibeh, an expert on Islamic movements and editor-in-chief of the Islamic monthly, Al Ummah.

A comparison between conditions set by the Brotherhood to join the government of former Prime Minister Mudar Badran (1989-1991) — their only participation in government — and reasons behind their historic boycott of the Nov. 4 elections, clearly reflected a change in priorities.

A 14-point list submitted to Mr. Badran at the height of their parliamentary representation in 1989 reflected what Mr. Gharaibeh defined as "a romantic vision of politics."

They included demands for

enforcing Sharia (Islamic law), including amending all legislation contradicting it, restoring personal funds deposited abroad in order to finance development projects and banning alcohol sales to Muslims.

However, they only managed to ban alcohol on Royal Jordanian flights to and from Arab capitals, temporarily segregate sexes at some of the ministries they ran, and set up a Sharia college at Yarmouk University.

These actions alarmed many Jordanians, long accustomed to liberal policies and social tolerance.

"But last year, when they announced the boycott of the general elections, they confronted the government with real political concerns such as human rights, civic and political freedoms, and constitutional reforms," Mr. Gharaibeh stressed.

Though the Brotherhood fiercely opposed the 1994 peace treaty with Israel, the movement's leader, Abdul Majeed Thneibat, steered clear from including the abrogation of the treaty among the conditions to participate in the 1997 elections.

Instead, they demanded a halt to "normalisation with the Zionist enemy," an indication of the party's increased pragmatism.

The failure of leftist and nationalist groups to expand their power base helped provide the Islamist movement with new pockets of supporters.

"The left failed to renew its leadership and re-package its political programme in order to recruit more youths," said social democrat Jamil Nimri. "And when a political force

loses the support of the youth, it loses almost everything," added Mr. Nimri, a columnist at Al Arab Al Yawm newspaper.

Islamic movements also appear to have gained from the widely perceived restrictions on civil and public freedoms, which culminated in riots in the southern poverty-stricken city of Ma'an in February.

The Muslim Brotherhood and its political arm, the Islamic Action Front (IAF), have been vocal critics of the policies of Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali since his government was sworn in last March.

They strongly rejected last

May's controversial amendments to the press law, criticised at home and abroad for "placing freedom of expression under siege."

They have also blasted the "one-person, one-vote" electoral system used in the 1993 and 1997 general elections on grounds that it encouraged tribalism at the expense of political parties.

Two weeks ago, they accused the government of "bluffing" when it published a long-awaited draft elections law that retained most of the old articles.

Their campaign against the government's controversial privatisation drive, which they argue is tailored to bene-

fit "only a handful of the government's friends," not the large majority of Jordanians, has won wide support.

"People know where we stand," said a Muslim Brotherhood leader who requested anonymity. "We are against restrictions on the press and public liberties and against the one-person, one-vote system," he added. "We are also against corruption, favouritism and nepotism and the way in which privatisation is being carried out."

"The more the government goes against the people, the more the people will turn to us. You could say the government is helping us enlarge the movement."

### what's going on

#### FILMS

\* Spanish children's film "Palace" at Instituto Cervantes, Jabel Amman on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

\* "Fern Gully: The Last Rainforest" at the American Center, Abdoun on Thursday at 5:00 p.m.

#### CONCERT

\* The cycle "The Miracle of Life" from the poems of Jabara Ibrahim Jabara, composed by Agnes Bashir, will be sung by Tania Tamara Nasser at Darat Al Fuman, Jabel Weibdeh on Friday, April 17 (7:00 p.m.-9:00 p.m.).

#### POETRY RECITAL

\* Poetry recital (in English) of Ebel Adnan poems by May Muzaffar at Darat Al Fuman, Jabel Weibdeh on Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

#### LECTURE

\* "Mount Nebo, New Archaeological Excavations 1967-1997" by Professor Michele Piccirilli on Thursday at the Friends of Archaeology Society at 6:30 p.m.

#### EXHIBITIONS

\* Private collection of Jan Kassay entitled "Flowers Series" at the Jordan River Designs Project showroom, Jabel Amman (Tel. 4613081/2), until April 22.

\* Photographic exhibition entitled "A tour in the Dead Sea" by Jausen and Savignac at the French Cultural Centre, until April 30.







**C-TOWN AMMAN 7th CIRCLE TEL: 814129**











## Senior U.S. official says Jordan must do more to lure foreign direct investments

By Ghaila Alul  
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A senior U.S. official Tuesday praised Jordan's commitment towards privatisation, but said more needed to be done to lure foreign direct investments into the country.

In a Worldnet dialogue on U.S. assistance to Jordan, Undersecretary of State for Economic, Business and Agricultural Affairs, Stuart Eizenstat, said Jordan's privatisation efforts will also encourage U.S. investments in the Kingdom.

"There is no question that U.S. companies will take advantage of this as the environment becomes more and more positive for foreign investment," Mr. Eizenstat added.

Jordan's comprehensive privatisation strategy, which picked up momentum two years ago, is aimed at increasing the role of the private sector and reducing the government's direct participation in the productive sectors in

a bid to target government efforts towards combating poverty and unemployment.

Jordan and the U.S. — through their recently negotiated bilateral investment treaty — hope to enhance their business cooperation through encouraging investments in both countries.

"The treaty, [which will be presented to the U.S. Congress for ratification this year] will encourage U.S. investments in Jordan by assuring Americans that their investments are protected against expropriation," said Mr. Eizenstat.

"The Commerce Department and the State Department and USAID are all working to encourage direct foreign investment through trade missions, discussions and seminars in the United States and through being real cheerleaders for Jordan, because we believe very much in what your country is doing and that is a tremendously good place for investment, where people will do very well," Mr. Eizenstat said.

Jordan has recently taken ambitious steps to improve its investment climate especially after Al Hassan Industrial Estate in the northern city of Irbid was officially designated as a Qualifying Industrial Zone (QIZ).

Under the QIZ agreement, signed between Jordan and Israel in November, products manufactured at the zone have free access to U.S. markets without reciprocal benefits.

When asked what affect a possible future free trade agreement with the U.S. would have on the QIZ status, Mr. Eizenstat said Jordan would need to make a number of changes to its trade regime pertaining to the elimination of all tariff and non-tariff barriers before negotiating such an agreement with the U.S.

"This is obviously a goal to which we can aspire, and Jordan is certainly putting in economic reforms which, over time, may place it in that situation," he said.

According to officials, the QIZ has so far succeeded in attracting foreign investors who were impressed by the quota free treatment at the zone.

Kelly Kammerer, counselor and acting assistant administrator for Asia and the Near East, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), told the audience that the U.S. has extended financial and technical assistance aimed at supporting Jordan's economy and the privatisation process.

In 1998, the U.S. contributed a total of \$271 million to Jordan, \$140 million of which, were allocated by USAID to increase economic opportunities for Jordanians and to support water as well as health and family planning programmes.

"These three develop-

ment challenges are closely linked as rapid population growth increases demand for water and requires the creation of new employment and income opportunities," he added.

The U.S. has also forgiven \$700 million in Jordanian debt to Washington.

U.S. assistance levels have increased by 1,800 per cent, from \$7.2 million in 1996 to \$126 million in 1997, said Mr. Kammerer.

"Our assistance levels now make Jordan the fifth largest recipient of foreign assistance of any country in the world," the undersecretary said.

While praising Jordan's efforts targeted towards jump-starting its economy and upgrading its industries to international standards, Mr. Eizenstat emphasised that the Kingdom has to exert additional efforts to accelerate the implementation of internationally-acceptable Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) laws.

"We have serious concerns about the intellectual property rights regime in Jordan. Your patent, copyright and trademark legislation is not at world standards and is inadequate," he said.

Jordan's 16 drug manufacturers, whose exports topped \$140 million last year, have been facing pressure from the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA) which this week recommended that Jordan be moved from the "Watch" list to the "Priority Watch" list.

This move, it said, was "based on evidence that the situation has worsened despite intense diplomatic pressure from major trading partners."

PhRMA's request coincided with a visit by a Jordanian delegation to Washington to discuss

patent protection, copyrights and trademark legislation.

Mr. Eizenstat said the negotiations in Washington will influence the question on whether or not Jordan will be placed on a special 301 "Priority Watch" list, expected to be released on April 30.

"No decision has been made at this point. We are hopeful that steps can be taken which will avoid that, but this will depend on what progress is being made in Jordan," he said.

During the wide ranging dialogue, Mr. Eizenstat also touched upon the Open Skies civil aviation agreement the U.S. and Jordan negotiated last year.

He said the agreement is expected to increase air travel and tourism between the two countries and encourage more investments.

## Unicef

The United Nations Children's Fund, with headquarters in New York and Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa based in Amman, seeks qualified candidates for the following position:

**Sr. Admin. Assistant**  
**Fixed-Term till February 1999 in Amman**

**Purpose of the Post:** To carry out broad administrative support functions of the UNICEF MENA Regional Office. Key Functions: Administer all travel arrangements following organisational rules and liaise with the office travel agency. Provide administrative support to office meetings, workshops and seminars. Supervise office registry, Messengers Service, and manage the Transport Unit. Procure small value administrative supplies and supervise capital assets/office equipment maintenance & records.

**Education:** First University Degree preferably in Business Administration or related subject.

**Skills and Ability:** Knowledge & experience with computer applications, management & electronic communications. Ability to draft correspondence with very good writing skills in English and to organise, prioritise and manage the work of the Administrative Unit. Good judgement, initiative and a high sense of responsibility & ability to establish harmonious working relationship in an international and multi-cultural environment.

**Languages:** Fluency in both Arabic & English required. Knowledge of French an asset.

**Experience:** Minimum five to seven years of progressive work experience in Administration, particularly related to travel management. Experience in an international organisation or environment desirable.

Please send detailed resume, in English, quoting reference GS/RO 98-05 to:  
**Asst. Admin./Personnel Officer, UNICEF Regional Office,**  
**P.O. Box 840028, Amman-11184, Jordan.**

Applications for this position must be received by April 30, 1998. Acknowledgement will only be sent to short-listed candidates under serious consideration.

UNICEF is a smoke-free environment.

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SUBSIDIARY											
TELEPHONE: 607111 / 607119											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 15/04/1998											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	PAST 12 MONTHS LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF SHARES	NO. OF TRADS.	VALUE TRADED	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	%
350.000	251.000	ARAB BANK	14.1	1.16	4	1020	351100	344.00	344.00	-	0.1
2.340	1.660	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8.5	0.00	2	1000	1730	3.74	3.74	-	0.1
2.680	1.650	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	9.3	7.83	5	6750	12113	1.79	1.80	-	0.2
5.500	4.660	THE HOUSING BK.	16.9	2.70	17	12224	59920	5.32	5.34	-	0.2
4.180	1.750	JOR. CREDIT BANK	8.8	0.00	1	5550	9990	1.80	1.80	-	0.1
920	590	JOR. GULF BANK	4.1	10.14	22	28950	19976	69	69	-	0.1
4.190	2.800	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	40.5	2.51	1	10000	26600	2.80	2.66	-	14
1.990	1.770	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	14.9	0.00	6	1147	1147	1.77	1.77	-	0.1
4.740	2.500	ARAB BANKING CO.	21.2	0.00	1	1000	2700	2.79	2.70	-	0.9
BANK SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 239.24	%CHG: +0.03	59	66146	485275				
2.400	1.590	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	6.2	11.26	12	25400	55348	2.18	2.22	-	0.4
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 123.18	%CHG: +0.19	12	25400	55348				
2.240	1.550	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	10.6	4.57	17	8362	18365	2.20	2.19	-	0.1
4.030	3.320	IRBIO ELECTRICITY	14.5	4.26	4	594	1392	2.30	2.35	-	0.5
5.500	2.450	HIDDEN MINERALS	49.3	0.00	1	100	451	4.70	5.1	-	19
1.550	960	NATL. PORTFOLIO	42.7	0.00	1	100	107	1.08	1.07	-	0.1
9.500	6.700	ALRAI	9.2	6.62	2	93	840	9.15	9.06	-	0.9
1.090	900	SABER EDUCATION	17.0	0.00	7	5200	974	97	97	-	0.1
1.830	1.460	UNITED CO.	6.5	7.43	19	6550	9588	1.46	1.48	-	0.2
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 119.24	%CHG: +0.15	51	20999	35786				
1.160	960	ATTAMORSE	9	0.00	2	4200	4620	1.10	1.10	-	0.2
4.450	2.690	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	17.2	3.79	19	12417	36123	2.92	2.90	-	0.2
4.140	3.050	JOR. PROPERTIES	8.5	3.28	6	32177	102894	3.05	3.1	-	19
11.160	9.200	JOR. PETROL. RETAIL	10.6	8.11	6	2504	27645	10.95	10.96	-	0.1
6.700	4.500	JORDAN TANNING	8.8	7.27	1	250	1375	5.50	5.50	-	0.1
2.210	1.100	INDUSTRIAL CORP. AGR.	9	0.00	3	500	578	1.20	1.15	-	0.5
5.700	3.440	ARAB PHARM. HMF.	14.7	3.75	25	7600	40668	3.05	3.1	-	0.4
1.530	1.020	JOR. PIPES MANFC.	11.1	7.46	2	350	469	1.34	1.34	-	0.1
2.330	1.700	GENERAL HITING	9	4.39	1	300	501	1.75	1.67	-	0.8
1.420	750	PAPFA INDUSTRIES	9	0.00	1	252	305	2.82	2.82	-	0.2
6.250	4.400	QAR ALDAMA DV. INV.	7.1	5.94	16	2220	13024	5.85	5.89	-	0.4
3.420	2.220	ARAB ALUM. IND.	6.6	8.83	4	750	2120	2.80	2.83	-	0.3
1.570	400	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	16.6	0.00	9	10000	4990	50	49	-	0.1
1.110	670	ARAB PAPER CORP. TRD.	21.7	0.00	10	18332	12836	504	504	-	0.1
620	510	NATIONAL INDUS.	9	0.00	1	500	275	54	55	-	0.2
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS			INDEX: 110.66	%CHG: -0.10	273	234532	354997				
GRAND TOTAL			INDEX: 169.78	%CHG: -0.02	395	347077	931407				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR WEDNESDAY 15/04/1998											
N 1.050	910	EXPORT & FIN. BNC. 754	17.0	0.00	11	13200	8901	91	92	-	0.1
N 1.330	1.010	ISLAND INSURANCE CO	9	0.00	20	18900	21420	1.20	1.15	-	0.5
N 530	340	JOR. TRADE FAC.	9	0.00	20	7600	30405	41	40	-	0.1
N 620	360	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	19	46750	18752	41	40	-	0.1
N 1.220	1.000	SPECIALIZED JOR. 754	78.9	0.00	1	22000	20020	1.16	1.16	-	0.1
N 2.220	1.050	CENTURY INV. GROUP	9	0.00	1	43000	86000	2.00	2.00	-	0.1
N 290	170	JOR. INDUS. MATCH-JENCO	9	0.00	13	16700	2171	1.13	1.13	-	0.1
N 470	240	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	47.2	0.00	20	59000	23780	40	41	-	0.1
N 570	360	WACT. NUT. & ENG. RANWOOD	9	0.00	5	3250	1218	37	33	-	0.4
N 600	310	NATYAK OIES & MOULDS	9	0.00	2	600	210	34	34	-	0.1
N 690	580	MOEAST PHARM. 901	8	0.00	2	1250	650	62	62	-	0.1
N 730	550	RAZI PHARM.	2	0.00	5	11577	1169	62	63	-	0.1
N 860	240	INDOS. ENG.	9	0.00	2	2200	616	28	28	-	0.1
N 830	490	ZINERANIC	13.1	0.00	1	1000	908	69	69	-	0.1
N 950	550	ADVANCED PHARM. IND.	9	0.00	13	32050	19761	61	62	-	0.1
N 600	370	PEARL SAN. P. CONV.	9	0.00	1	100	40	40	40	-	0.1
N 740	430	NATL. POLYETH.	46.9	0.00	32	29142	12404	70	71	-	0.1
N 1.000	660	NAT. ALUMINIUM. 754	46.9	0.00	7	1827	1967	1.05	1.08	-	0.3
N 1.310	1.000	NUTRIGAR	12.5	9.24	9	6550	4936	83	82	-	0.1
N 1.600	750	EXCAL PRINT CO. 754	12.5	9.24	9	6550	4936	83	82	-	0.1
GRAND TOTAL			198	799746	1050206						

## Local firms win JD0.9m tender to expand QIZ

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Industrial Estates Corporation (JIEC) Wednesday awarded a consortium of Jordanian firms a JD891,819 tender to expand Al Hassan Industrial City near Irbid to 202 dunams of land.

JIEC Director General Amer Majali, who signed the deal with the firms' general managers, said the tender constitutes the first phase of an expansion plan designed to secure more space for factories at the industrial city to meet the growing demand.

A large number of local, Arab and foreign investors have applied for space in view of the fact that products produced at the industrial city enjoy duty-free access to U.S. markets under the Qualifying Industrial Zone (QIZ) agreement.

The expansion plan aims at creating 2,400 jobs at 60 new plants in the zone, Mr. Majali pointed out.

The formal QIZ designation of Irbid's Al Hassan Industrial City by the U.S. last month is intended to support the peace process by showing some of the much promised economic dividends that many Jordanians are still awaiting.

Jordan and Israeli manufacturers are benefiting from the privilege of exporting freely to U.S. markets.

## THE Daily Crossword Edited by Wayne Robert Williams

1 Con game  
5 Between one another  
10 Faucet flaw  
14 Facility  
15 More mature  
16 Santa — CA  
17 With 57A, comment by 26A  
20 Anne de Beauvoir  
21 Additional conjunctions  
22 \$10 gold coins  
23 Inorganic  
25 Of India: pref.  
26 Legendary baseball manager  
31 Educate  
34 Politic  
35 Simian  
36 Excessive anger  
37 The March King  
39 Cancer Verdon  
40 Wrath  
41 Letter opener?  
42 Competed in the Tour de France  
43 26A  
44 affectionately  
47 Washington bills  
48 Forward progress  
52 Ashe Stadium event  
55 Apple PCs  
56 After the style of  
57 See 17A  
60 Flying: prel.  
61 Eatery  
62 First-class  
63 Hinged fastener  
64 Musical exercise piece  
65 Lower digits

DOWN  
1 Earthquake  
2 Desert plants  
3 Gray-faced cat  
4 (Silly bout that)

5 Showplaces  
6 Halfway point  
7 Makes a choice  
8 O.T. book  
9 Unfermented beverage  
10 St. George's monster  
11 Dice toss  
12 of Man  
13 Permission slip  
18 Abraham's wife  
19 Half a Black Forest spa?  
24 homo (Behold the man!)

25 Doctrines  
27 Now — talking!  
28 Rubenmark  
29 Fencing sword  
30 Make a loan  
31 Small combo  
32 British nobleman  
33 Elderly  
37 Glenn Miller's "Sunrise"  
38 Bumpkins  
39 Surround

41 Supergiant star in Cygnus  
42 Brag  
44 Soda can  
45 Appointed  
46 Sale  
49 Southern elm  
50 Skirt shape

51 Director Peter Park state  
52 Zion National Park state  
53 Mets stadium  
54 Flowers  
55 List of dishes  
56 Tiny portion  
59 Station or tedora

## Peanuts



## Andy Capp



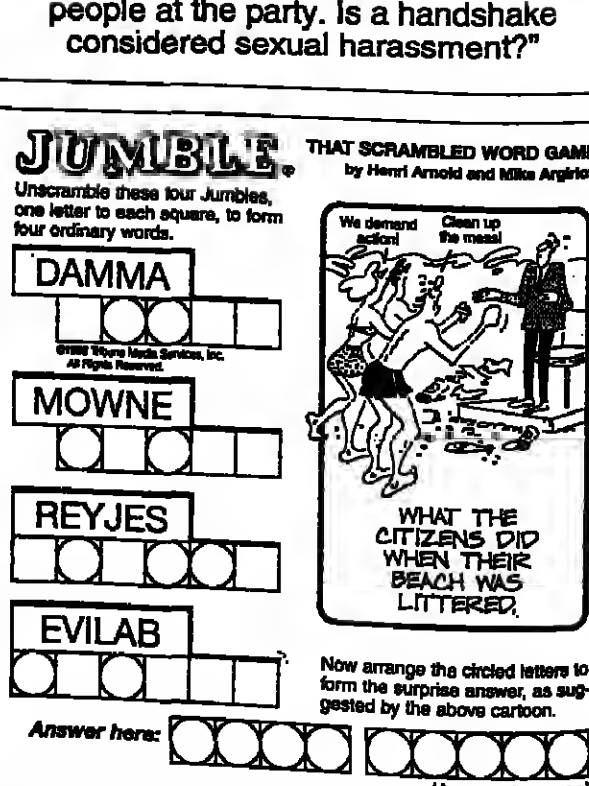
## Mutt'n' Jeff



## THE BETTER HALF. By Glasbergen



## JUMBLE



World Business

A review of news from

National Textile and Company doubles sales

Major Currencies & Cross Rates

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF
US Dollar	1.0000	1.7966	0.5932	0.4938
British Pound	0.5566	1.6863	1.0000	0.8282
Japanese Yen	0.0077	0.0077	0.0077	0.0077
Swiss Franc	0.4938	0.8282	0.8282	1.0000

Middle East & Far East

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAM
US Dollar	1.0000	0.7090	2.7066	0.3757
British Pound	0.5566	0.1890	2.0000	0.2



## Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic Press

### National Textile and Plastic Industries Company doubles sales to JD2.8 million

THE NATIONAL Textile and Plastic Industries Company has emerged from the red and posted a small profit at the end of last year after registering over JD2.8 million in sales last year, double the amount posted in 1996. Board Chairman Khalil Ben Khadra told the general assembly that there was an increase in total production last year as the output reached 281 tonnes which represented 91.5 per cent of production capacity. In 1996, the output represented 82 per cent of production capacity.

Mr. Ben Khadra said 43.2 per cent of the sales were in the local market with the remaining 56.8 per cent sold to outside markets. He highlighted the participation of the company in many Jordanian industrial fairs which were held abroad such as those in Ethiopia, Bosnia and Sudan. "The sharp price competition in South East Asian countries has prevented us until now to enter effectively to those markets," Mr. Ben Khadra said.

The chairman indicated that the company was able to reduce its total liabilities by JD434,700 which is double the amount of reduction achieved in 1996. "The largest portion in the decrease was in bank cred-

its — meaning that there is an acceleration in repaying the indebtedness," he explained.

Mr. Ben Khadra expected price stability to continue around reasonable levels and, as such, serve as a base for a more feasible operation. He noted in this regard that the prices of raw materials have declined during the last quarter of 1997 because the raw materials are derived from oil, the prices of which have declined during the same period.

"In addition, a Kuwaiti company started towards the end of last year to produce propylene granules and to sell the product in the market. Due to the larger supply, the price remained relatively low, Mr. Ben Khadra said.

He went on to point out that the continuation of the oil-for-food agreement between Baghdad and the United Nations will open wider opportunity for cooperation with Iraq in terms of the volume of sales. He concluded by stressing that the company aims at diversifying its export markets. "The company has sale contracts with two outside markets and serious negotiations are underway with a third outside market," Mr. Ben Khadra said.

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 1998

**ARIES:** (March 21 to April 19) A temper flare-up, no matter how small, could make a negative impression. So bite your tongue. That won't hurt as much as the argument would. It won't be so difficult. All you have to do is listen instead of talking.

**TAURUS:** (April 20 to May 20) Finish up business first thing this morning. You'll start losing interest as the day progresses. That's unusual for you. But, there's something going on now that's changing all that. If you don't have enough excuses to travel already, do it because a faraway friend wants to see you very badly.

**GEMINI:** (May 21 to June 21) If you're going shopping this afternoon, make a list first. Don't forget things you need for your house. If you've been struggling with a small appliance that's broken, it's hard to realise how much time you spend on chores.

**CANCER:** (June 22 to July 21) Your workload is so heavy and confusing today that you might be just about ready to quit the whole thing. Don't do that. Get a partner to help. Your next lesson has to do with delegation.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) You've been in such a good mood lately, you may have forgotten to do a couple important tasks. Now it's imperative that you get serious. Don't you just hate it when this happens? Don't complain.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 21) An older person may be stressed today, but you should be in a good mood. Your love life is going well. If you don't have a love life, you're liable to stumble onto one. A person who would be very good for you is not far away.

**LIBRA:** (September 22 to October 21) It's time to think about changes you want to make to your home. If you get everything planned, you could make a lot of progress over the weekend. Even if you've got company coming over, you can still tackle a big project. That might even be what they're coming for.

**SCORPIO:** (October 22 to November 21) You'll learn the most today by working with an expert. That's your favourite way of acquiring information. It may interfere with your routine, but that's OK. With a little bit of fancy stepping — and Lord knows you're good at that — you'll be able to find the time.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) Now you have to take care of practical matters. Where's the money coming from, who gets it first, and how much will be left over? It's important to know how much you have so you can figure out how much you'll need. You may not get the raise yet, but you're moving in that direction.

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) You may wake up confused, but by lunchtime your head should clear. It'll be easy to see what to do next, and it's going to look like fun. You'll be anxious to get started.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) You've got about 80 different things to finish, and you've only started 15. Not only do you have to hurry, you need a clear idea of where you're going. Someone you don't like is telling you what to do, and he or she is right.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) There are hassles first thing this morning, but conditions get better. By afternoon, you'll be in a good mood. By tonight, you'll be ready to party.

## HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR THURSDAY, APRIL 16, 1998

thinking from the point of view of your boss, teacher, parent or whatever other authority figure looms prominent in your life. If you don't, you could be completely blindsided by something this person asks you to do.

**LEO:** (July 22 to August 21) Fun, games, romance, travel, adventure, excitement — all of this and more is in store for you, on a Thursday yet! How are you going to make the most of this marvellous advantage? The obvious first step is to get together with the one you love. This could be your sweetheart, mate or a child.

**VIRGO:** (August 22 to September 21) Your home is still in an uproar, but that's OK. It may seem like everything is costing too much. You may have also made a bigger mess than you had anticipated. Not to worry. By tomorrow, conditions will be a little more fun and a little less tense.

**LIBRA:** (September 22 to October 21) Something you find difficult is ridiculously easy for a co-worker. You've been trying to do it the hard way, and you've

been resisting. Stop both and you'll find everything getting easier. This won't make you less powerful. Quite the contrary. Master this skill and you'll be awesome.

**SCORPIO:** (October 22 to November 21) There are things going on today that need to stay confidential. That's not a problem for you, but it could be for a co-worker. Make sure this person doesn't know too much. Since you're not quite sure which person it is, you'd better be careful with everything you say.

**SAGITTARIUS:** (November 22 to December 21) You're looking good and pushing hard. You're strong and you've got the backing you need. You and another person can seize victory with one last monumental effort. Well, it's not even an effort, actually. It's more like fun. Congratulations, and keep up the good work!

**CAPRICORN:** (December 22 to January 20) You may experience confusion, but don't worry. It's part of the learning process. As you get further into the programme, every-

thing will make more sense. You'll certainly be proud of yourself for having gone through this mess and emerging triumphant, so don't even think about giving up.

**AQUARIUS:** (January 21 to February 19) It's better to put money into the bank than to take money out; it's better to pay bills than to charge new stuff. Remember that if a friend tries to talk you into spending money, True, sometimes you have to spend money to make money, but right now you have to pay off debts to make money.

**PISCES:** (February 20 to March 20) You're going to have to put up with an older person's ridicule. He or she thinks it's funny. You, however, don't appreciate feeling like the brunt of a joke. Can you lighten up about this? If not, nothing will make this assignment worthwhile. Give it a try. It might not be as hard as it looks.

## REUTERS The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.7866	0.8933	1.4908	129.38	1.4383	1778.20	2.0234	6.0250	
DE Mark	0.5586		0.3298	0.8297	71.96	0.8002	989.54	1.1252	3.3539
GB Sterling	1.6863	3.0284		2.5123	217.95	2.4254	2996.88	3.4102	10.1545
CH Franc	0.6708	120.44	0.3976		86.72	0.9639	1192.14	135.65	4.0393
JP Yen	0.0077	1.3878	0.4680	1.1615		1.1111	13.72	158.28	4.6531
CA Dollar	0.6953	1.2916	0.4225	1.0866	1.11		1270.80	1.4651	4.3265
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0107	0.3334	0.0839	1374.95	0.8096		11.38	3.3879
NL Guilder	0.4842	88.76	0.2929	73.68	63.91	0.7106	877.69		3.9788
FR Franc	0.1660	0.2982	0.0984	24.7477	21.45	0.2387	33.58	33.5800	

Middle Eastern Currencies									
Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	LBP	EGP
US Dollar		0.7090	3.7605	0.3770	3.6403	0.3049	3.6729	1528.00	3.4165
Jordan Dinar	1.4104		5.2888	0.5317	5.1344	0.4300	5.1804	2155.86	4.8188
Saudi Riyal	0.2686	0.1890		0.1005	0.97	0.0813	0.98	407.55	0.9109
Bahraini Dinar	2.66	1.8806	9.9483		9.88	0.8088	9.73	4054.38	0.0623
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1948	1.0903	1.0903		0.0838	1.01	419.88	0.9985
Kuwait Dinar	3.2798	2.3264	12.3008	1.2365	11.94		12.06	5013.12	0.9386
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1930	1.0211	1.0208	0.9911	0.0830		416.16	0.9302
Lebanese 1000	0.85	0.4839	2.4537	0.2486	2.3816	0.1995	2.4029		2.2362
Egyptian	0.2827	0.2075	1.0978	0.1103	1.0665	0.0892	1.0790	447.39	

Energy		
Currency	Last	revised
Brent	13.09	13.16
W. Texas	16.20	15.14
Bonny	13.09	13.16
Dubai	11.41	11.89
U.S. Gas	152.00	153.00

Mid-East Currencies				
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2686	0.4791	0.16812	0.39776
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.48926	0.16146	0.40615
KW Dinar	3.2798	5.89275	1.94477	4.89237
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.76644	1.57307	3.95725
CY Pound	1.8989	3.4078	1.1242	2.8279

JOD Cross Rates		
Currency	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1911	1.1971
DE Mark	0.3928	0.3946
CH Franc	0.4739	0.4763
FR Franc	0.1171	0.1177
JP Yen	0.547	0.5497
NL Guilder	0.3486	0.3503
IT Lira	0.397	0.399

Libor Fixing				
Period	-1-	-3-	-6-	-12-
Cncy.	Month	Month	Month	Year
USD	5.6797	5.7500	5.7891	5.9141
GBP	7.4375	7.5104	7.5104	7.4844
JPY	0.6771	0.7604	0.7708	0.8125
DEM	3.6249	3.7658	3.8904	4.0468
FRF	3.5313	1.5781	1.7109	1.9063
CHF	1.4375	3.6289	3.7344	3.9375
ITL	5.5960	5.2280	4.9260	-

## Are your ear drums ready? NIGHT TRAIN

a renowned British Band has arrived



Blues, & Rock 'n' Roll,  
performed 5 nights a week as we  
**LOVE ALL SERVE ALL.**  
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## Sports

Jordan Times, Thursday-Friday, April 16-17, 1998 11

1st Division Basketball Championship  
Orthodoxi beat Ahli to top standings

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Al Orthodoxi Wednesday beat all-time rivals Al Ahli 84-61 to take the lead in the three-team 1st Division Basketball Championship playoffs.

Though Al Ahli held on to a 34-33 lead at halftime, their poor physical condition and incomplete defense were the main reasons behind their eventual defeat.

Al Ahli had also held to a 32 score against Al Orthodoxi to whom they lost 78-63 in the playoff match of the round event.

Orthodoxi consolidated their lead towards the end of the second half as Saqqa sank in a three-point shot to give his team a 63-48 lead followed by six consecutive points by Samara, aided by Yaman Du'eis in rebounding and follow up.

Al Ahli, on the other hand, were led by Faisal

Nsour and Yousef Zaghoul as the team missed the efforts of Mohammad Shamali and Marwan Ma'touq who are both nursing injuries.

The lineup also again missed centre Ramez Hammoudh who has quit the team for personal reasons.

The team is suffering the ill-effects of inadequate pre-season training which led to an inconsistent form, after officials concentrated more on technicalities like recruiting a coach and luring back veterans to the lineup.

Wednesday's win enabled Al Orthodoxi to top the standings for now before facing titleholders Al Jazzeh Saturday.

That game, in addition to winning again in the second round of the playoffs will be the deciding factor in the fight for title since the top two are tied in overall points.

After losing to the two other top teams in the pre-

liminary rounds, Al Ahli are third and their ambitions were confined to taking the runner up spot after being ruled out of contention for the title.

However, that hope has also been ruled out and it seems they will replace Al Orthodoxi in third place in the final standings.

In the preliminary round, Al Jazzeh beat Al Orthodoxi 92-84 and lost 73-69. However, they managed to beat Al Ahli twice 75-69, and 57-53.

After ending Al Orthodoxi's 1976-1989 undisputed reign, Al Ahli were champions in 1990, 1992, 1993 and 1994 aided by the signing of Naser Bushnaq.

Al Orthodoxi came back to win in 1991, 1995 and 1996 and Al Jazzeh ended a 30-year domination among the two rivals last season.

## Kournikova, Likhovtseva out of Australian Fed Cup

PERTH (AFP) — Russian stars Anna Kournikova and Elena Likhovtseva withdrew Wednesday from this weekend's Federation Cup clash with Australia.

Tennis Australia said Kournikova had a strained stomach muscle while no reason was given for Likhovtseva's absence except that she was "unavailable."

The Russian team now consists of Tania Panova, ranked 83 in the world, Ekaterina Sysoeva, ranked 126, and the unranked Anastasia Myskina.

Australian team captain Lesley Bowrey said she was confident but wary with her squad including Rachel McQuillan ranked 60 in the world, Kerry-Anne Guse at 65, Annabel Ellwood 104 and Rennae Stubbs at 322.

"The Russians have a reputation of producing stars out of nowhere and now we have to be wary of the unknown," she said.

"We don't know what's coming or what lays ahead."

The teams meet in the first round tie on grass at Royal King's Park in Perth where Australia beat the Slovak Republic in 1995.

The Russians are expected to arrive here late Wednesday. Bowrey, whose squad is already in Perth, said the extra practice on grass could prove beneficial.

"When you are talking changing surfaces, it's more difficult to walk on to grass than any other surface," she said.

"You really need to get the hours up on grass. The more time our girls spend on the courts now, the better they'll feel on the weekend."

## Chang wins, Rafter knocked out of Japan Open

TOKYO (AFP) — Tournament favourite Patrick Rafter was the biggest casualty in the Japan Open tennis Wednesday, crashing to a shock straight sets defeat as Michael Chang cruised through to the next round.

The top-seeded Australian was subjected to an array of aces and lightning service return winners by 181st-ranked American Brian MacPhie before losing 3-6, 6-7 (4/7).

"It's always tough coming to a new tournament, new conditions, new surface and to play someone like Brian. He is very aggressive and it's hard to get into rhythm. You never know what's gonna happen," said Rafter.

It was Rafter's first match this week after a busy weekend in India where he collected his third career title.

Rafter and other seven



Brian MacPhie of the U.S. raises his arms in celebration after upsetting Australian Pat Rafter in the second round of the Japan Open (Reuters photo)

on the Ariake Coliseum centre court.

"Today was actually a very big start for me," said Chang. "Looking at my career, I think it was a normal first second-round match, but today I was quite pleased with the way that things went."

"Fortunately in my career, I haven't had to deal with these kind of major injuries before with the exception of fracturing my hip at the end of 1989, so I'm quite overjoyed that I was able to win my first match."

"My knee is not 100 per cent at the moment, but the important thing is that I'm up on the court. I'm moving better each day and on top of that, I don't feel pain," he added.

After beating Rafter, the world number four, MacPhie said: "I feel like I served pretty well. I think to beat someone like Pat, you have to serve well consistently. I think it was a big key."

"It was definitely the best win in my career. Maybe he was not at the top of his game like he has been in other tournaments, but it gives me confidence to compete at that level," added MacPhie, who fired 10 aces and seven service return winners.

It was sweet revenge for the 25-year-old American who lost his only previous meeting against Rafter in Hong Kong a year ago.



Pat Rafter of Australia makes a return to American Brian MacPhie during the second round of the Japan Open tennis tournament in Tokyo (Reuters photo)

men's top seeds received first round byes.

Second-seeded Michael Chang showed no ill effects from his knee injury as he raced to a 6-4, 6-1 victory over John van Lottum of the Netherlands.

Chang injured his left knee a month ago at Indian Wells and came back to action last week in Hong Kong where he suffered his first first-round defeat in Asia.

But the 1989 French Open champion was untroubled by the injury in his second comeback match shortly after Rafter was knocked out

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## Knicks lose to Wizards

NEW YORK (AP) — The Knicks, whose protest over their controversial loss at Miami was denied before the game, missed a chance to clinch a playoff spot Tuesday by losing 104-102 to the struggling Washington Wizards.

New York failed to eliminate the Wizards from playoff contention and also blew an opportunity to move back into seventh place in the East after New Jersey lost at home to Toronto.

Tracy Murray scored 27 points as Washington snapped a three-game losing streak. The Wizards must win their final three games hope either New York or New Jersey loses the rest of its games to make the playoffs.

Allan Houston scored 23 for New York.

• **Raptors 96, Nets 92:** In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Doug Christie scored 13 of his 23 points in the fourth quarter, and Marcus Camby set a team record with 11 blocked shots as Toronto broke a 13-game losing streak.

Camby had 15 points, 12 rebounds for his first triple double as the Raptors rallied from an 11-point deficit late in the third quarter to prevent New Jersey from clinching its first playoff berth since 1994.

Keith Van Horn led New Jersey with 25 points and a career-high 16 rebounds. Kendall Gill had 23 points as the Nets' five-game winning streak was snapped.

• **Hornets 104, Bucks 82:** In Milwaukee, Glen Rice scored 30 points and Charlotte snapped a five-game road skid by outscoring Milwaukee 36-18 in the second quarter.

Anthony Mason had half of his 18 points in the second period, when the Hornets shot 72.7 percent (16-of-22) to take a 57-42 halftime lead.

Charlotte remained one game ahead of Atlanta for fourth place in the Eastern Conference playoffs and homecourt advantage in the first round of the playoffs. Ervin Johnson had 17

rebounds and 16 points for Milwaukee.

• **Hawks 95, 76ers 94:** In Atlanta, Alan Henderson scored a career-high 39 points and Mookie Blaylock's 10th steal of the game prevented a potential game-winning shot as Atlanta won its third straight.

Blaylock made his career-high 10th steal with 1.5 seconds left to preserve the win. He finished with 11 assists and 14 points and to record his second triple-double of the season. He also had eight rebounds.

Henderson was 16-for-21 from the field in surpassing his previous career-high of 27 points.

Allen Iverson led Philadelphia with 26.

• **Cavaliers 95, Celtics 86:** In Cleveland, Shawn Kemp had 22 points and 10 rebounds as Cleveland clinched at least sixth place in the Eastern Conference.

The victory was the Cavs' 46th of the season, four more than last year's total after changing the entire starting lineup.

Derek Anderson came off the bench to score 15 against three of his ex-teammates and former Kentucky coach Rick Pitino.

Antoine Walker led the Celtics with 31 points.

• **Lakers 111, Mavericks 95:** In Dallas, Shaquille O'Neal scored 34 points, 12 of them off of dunks, and the Los Angeles Lakers rolled to their 14th victory in 16 games.

O'Neal decided the game at the start of the third quarter scoring 10 points during a 21-5 run.

Michael Finley scored 23 points for the Mavericks. Hubert Davis added 15.

• **Rockets 94, Nuggets 88:** In Houston, Mario Elie scored 23 points, including 13 in the fourth quarter, as the Houston overcame a 14-point halftime deficit to win.

Hakeem Olajuwon finished with 13 points, 18 rebounds and eight assists and Clyde Drexler had 16 to drop the Nuggets to 2-37 on the road.

LaPhonso Ellis and Cory Alexander led the Nuggets with 22 points each.

• **Jazz 126, Timberwolves 109:** In Salt Lake City, Karl Malone had 44 points, 14 rebounds and six assists as Utah moved ahead of Chicago in the race for home-court advantage throughout the playoffs.

The victory gave Utah a 60-19 record, the same as the Bulls.

The Jazz hold the tiebreaker edge by virtue of their season sweep of the Bulls.

Malone scored 16 points in the fourth quarter after Minnesota cut a 25-point Utah first-half lead to seven.

Stephen Marbury had 25 points and 13 assists for Minnesota.

Jeff Hornacek had 20 for Utah.

• **SuperSonics 110, Grizzlies 98:** In Seattle, Gary Payton scored 27 points and Seattle reached the 60-win plateau for the third time in five seasons.

The Sonics stayed a half game behind Utah for the best record in the West and remained a game in front of the Los Angeles Lakers.

Hersey Hawkins scored 12 of his 15 points in the pivotal third quarter, when the Sonics fell behind momentarily and then went ahead to stay. Vin Baker added 18 points and nine rebounds for Seattle.

Vancouver, which lost its 10th straight game to the Sonics, was led by Tony Massenburg's 22 points.

• **Trail Blazers 92, Kings 66:** In Portland, Oregon, reserve Walt Williams scored all 19 of his points in the second quarter and Arvydas Sabonis returned to the Portland lineup with 16 points and nine rebounds.

The victory, combined with Minnesota's loss at Utah, clinched the No. 6 playoff spot in the Western Conference for Portland.

Cortis Williamson scored 12 and Billy Owens 11 for Sacramento.

## Service held for Hillsborough victims

LIVERPOOL (AFP) — A special memorial service to mark the ninth anniversary of the Hillsborough stadium disaster in which 96 Liverpool fans died will be held at the club's Anfield ground on Wednesday.

Between 5,000 and 10,000 people are expected to line the terraces of 'The Kop' stand to pay their respects to the supporters who lost their lives during the 1989 FA Cup semi-final

clash against Nottingham Forest.

The fans died from asphyxiation as crowds poured onto the terraces after police had opened gates into an enclosed area. They were unable to escape onto the pitch because of fencing designed to keep fans from invading the pitch.

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## Israel frees longest-held 'administrative detainee'

EL BIREH (AFP) — Israel released on Wednesday its longest-held Palestinian "administrative detainee," Ahmad Katamesh, after he spent more than five years in prison without trial.

Mr. Katamesh, 45, left Israel's Damon prison early Wednesday and returned to his home in this West Bank town next to Ramallah.

"I feel like I've come back from the cemetery. I'm very happy to be home," Mr. Katamesh said.

A senior West Bank leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP), Mr. Katamesh was arrested in Ramallah on September 1, 1992 at the height of the "intifada" uprising against Israeli occupation.

He had been hunted by Israeli security forces for 16 years and was reportedly interrogated after his arrest for 100 days about his role in the PFLP, a leftist faction of the Palestine Liberation of Organisation (PLO) based in Damascus.

He was then sentenced to six months in administrative detention — a term which was then renewed each half-year until now.

The military was ordered

twice to release Mr. Katamesh, once in December 1992 by the supreme court and once by a military judge in October 1993, but each time the army simply issued new administrative detention orders.

As part of the deal for his release, Mr. Katamesh agreed to speak with Israel's two main television stations, which were expected to broadcast the interview Thursday night, his attorney, Leah Tzamel, told AFP.

The Haaretz newspaper said Mr. Katamesh also agreed to sign a statement denouncing political violence, but Ms. Tzamel declined to comment on this.

Ms. Tzamel said Katamesh's release would be followed by the liberation of other administrative detainees "as the result of growing public opposition" to the military's use of imprisonment without trial for suspected Palestinians.

The detention procedure is covered by state of emergency legislation dating from Israel's creation 50 years ago and permits persons suspected of endangering state security to be held without trial for renewable six-month periods.

Under the procedure, neither

detainees nor their lawyers are informed of the charges or evidence against the suspects and they are never brought before a court.

At least 200 Palestinians are currently being held in administrative detention, five of them for more than three years.

But Ms. Tzamel said scores of others had been released in the past six months, largely as the result of lobbying by a group created by several Israeli lawyers called Open Doors.

Mr. Katamesh came from a family of well-known nationalists and his younger brother, Ribhi, was released early this month after serving four years in administrative detention for his activities in the PFLP.

Their oldest brother, Mohammad, was left partially paralysed and eventually died from injuries suffered when he was tortured during a spell in Israeli prisons in the late 1970s.

Four other Katamesh brothers all spent time in Israeli jails.

Palestinian National Authority officials said the release of Mr. Katamesh followed a recent request submitted by Yasser Arafat's deputy, Mahmoud Abbas, to Israeli cabinet secretary Danny Naveh.

## Israeli lawyer asks France to refuse SLA chief asylum

TEL AVIV (AFP) — An Israeli lawyer appealed to France Wednesday to refuse asylum to the head of a pro-Israeli Lebanese militia, General Antoine Lahad, as long as Israel refuses to release a Lebanese woman jailed since 1993 for trying to assassinate him.

Leah Tzamel, an attorney representing the Lebanese woman, Suha Bishara, wrote to French President Jacques Chirac Wednesday asking for his help in convincing Israel to release her client.

"It is inconceivable that France could welcome one of the main figures behind Israel's occupation of south Lebanon without trying to help this

young resistance fighter who long ago finished paying for an act for which she was never tried," Ms. Tzamel said in the letter, a copy of which was obtained by AFP.

According to Israeli press reports, Gen. Lahad could seek political asylum in France if Israel follows through on its stated desire to withdraw from the buffer zone occupied in south Lebanon by the Israeli army and Lahad's South Lebanon Army (SLA).

"The preconditions for welcoming Gen. Lahad in France must be the immediate closure of the Khiam prison and the release of Suha Bishara and the other detainees," Ms. Tzamel said, referring to an Israeli-run

jail in south Lebanon.

Ms. Tzamel has also appealed to Israel's supreme court to obtain the release of Ms. Bishara, 31, who shot and seriously wounded Gen. Lahad in 1988.

The Israeli government last month approved for the first time a 1978 U.N. resolution calling for the withdrawal of Israeli troops from Lebanon.

But Israel said it would only carry out the pullback if Lebanon agreed to security arrangements to protect northern Israel from attack by Islamists and Palestinian fighters.

Lebanon and its Syrian patron rejected the condition.

## Palestinians hope Blair can work N. Ireland magic with Israel

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Palestinians are hoping that British Prime Minister Tony Blair can work the same magic in Middle East negotiations as he did in Northern Ireland by pressuring Israel to make concessions for peace.

But unlike in Northern Ireland, Mr. Blair must take a backseat in the Middle East to the United States, which has been reluctant to override Israeli objections and put forward a package proposal to break the year-long deadlock in negotiations.

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat welcomed the Northern Ireland peace deal and said he hoped that Mr. Blair, who arrives in the region on Thursday, "will equally succeed in establishing the peace with Israel."

However, top Palestinian negotiator Saeb Erekat acknowledged that the Palestinians are "realistic." "We don't expect Blair to be able to solve everything," he said.

The Palestinians hope in particular that Mr. Blair, whose country currently holds the rotating presidency of the European Union (EU), can promote a package peace proposal that the United States has so far balked at officially putting on the table.

"The essential thing is the American proposals. Blair should urge the Americans to go public with their plans and should pressure Israel to abide by its agreements," especially concerning overdue troop withdrawals in the West Bank, Mr. Erekat said.

The Palestinians have expressed fears that Washington is backing away from their proposals, which reportedly would press Israel to cede 13 per cent of the West Bank to Palestinian control as the first step towards reviving negotiations.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has tried to prevent the United States from announcing the package, saying the 13 per cent scope is too large and instead offering a pullback of around nine per cent.

The same week as Mr. Blair's visit, U.S. special envoy Dennis Ross is expected to return to the region for the second time in a month in a new bid to find a compromise formula for the package.

Faced with the deadlock on the central issue of the troop withdrawals, Mr. Blair may focus instead on trying to clinch a deal on side issues which have remained unimplemented since 1995 self-rule accords, an EU diplomat said.

EU and Israeli officials say a deal is within reach on these so-called "interim peace issues," which include the opening of an airport and seaport and of a joint Israeli-Palestinian industrial zone in Palestinian-run Gaza.

EU officials said a push from Mr. Blair could in particular finalise an agreement for the industrial zone, planned for the Karni crossing point between

Gaza and Israel.

The key to meeting Israel's security concerns and sealing an agreement could be an EU financed, Germany-produced scanner system capable of quickly checking cargo trucks entering Israel from the zone for weapons or explosives, EU officials said.

While only a detail of the broader peace process, agreement on Karni would represent the first concrete achievement in the peace talks for more than 14 months.

Mr. Blair will also sign with Mr. Arafat an agreement creating a Palestinian-EU commission on security issues, part of European efforts to meet Israeli demands that the Palestinians conduct a stiff crackdown against Islamists.

Meanwhile, the Palestinians hope the energetic Mr. Blair, fresh off his victory in Northern Ireland, will sound a moral call to Mr. Netanyahu, who the Palestinians increasingly feel simply has no interest in advancing the peace process.

"Blair must teach Netanyahu the lessons of history. We hope Blair will tell Netanyahu to look forward and not backwards," Mr. Erekat said.

"While Blair is decisively putting all his weight behind stopping bloodshed, Netanyahu is building a future of bigotry, hatred and violence. He is creating another Northern Ireland here," he said.

## U.K. replaces Illustrious with bombers

LONDON (R) — Britain on Wednesday sent an extra four Tornados to the Gulf to keep up the military pressure on Iraq to abide by a United Nations agreement on weapons inspections.

The aircraft left a Royal Air Force base in Germany for Kuwait, joining eight other Tornados based there and

bringing Britain's air power in the region to 24 warplanes.

British defence ministry officials said the four bombers were taking the place of the British aircraft carrier Illustrious, which was sent to the Gulf at the height of the standoff between Iraq and the United Nations in February.

Illustrious, which carried 14

Harrier jump jets, is returning to Britain for a previously scheduled refit.

"The Tornados are being sent out as a demonstration of our resolve to stay in Kuwait until we are completely clear that [Iraqi President] Saddam Hussein will abide by the agreement with the U.N.," said a defence ministry official.



PIERCING THE TONGUE FOR SIVA & PARVATI: A Hindu devotee pierces his tongue with a five-foot iron rod in celebration of the Gajan festival in the village of Bainan in West Bengal state on Tuesday. The festival celebrates the marriage of the God Siva, one of the principal Hindu deities, and Goddess Parvati (Reuters photo)

## Algerian officers were arrested for murdering up to 70 people — press

ALGIERS (AFP) — Local officials arrested in the western Algerian city of Relizane were responsible for the execution of up to 70 civilians, the privately-owned Liberte daily newspaper reported Wednesday.

But the arrests received conflicting coverage in the local press with two other dailies — L'Authentique and Nouvelle Republique — reporting that the officials in question, the mayors of Relizane and of neighbouring Jdioua, had killed only two people.

There was no confirmation of the arrests of the officials and of members of self-defence groups from civilian or judicial authorities.

Earlier reports in the privately-owned media suggested that those arrested were installing a "reign of terror" in the region. 250 km southwest of Algiers, Liberte published an

account by a member of the Madani family from Jdioua whose brother was dragged off by Relizane's Mayor El Hadj Fergane and other armed men to be killed in 1995, with six other people.

"I recognised all of them," they were led by El Hadj Fergane, said the witness. "Just when I realised that my brother was not the only one to be kidnapped, one of the relatives of another victim told me that seven bodies had been found at Kerkaba," near Jdioua, he went on.

He said the bodies were so disfigured they were unrecognisable.

Other accounts gathered by Liberte indicated that between 50 and 70 people had been summarily executed.

An earlier Liberte report said the arrests had followed the discovery of 79 civilian bodies in Relizane, some of which had clearly

been hurried alive. Authentic sought to reassure readers that the authorities had discovered no mass graves other than those already used for alleged killings by Islamists.

The paper joined other media in arguing that the arrest of the two mayors demonstrated that the rule of law was functioning healthily in Algeria.

Despite the discrepancy in the number of executions for which the officials were responsible, Liberte concurred with other papers, stating: "today we have proof that no wrongdoing will be tolerated in a state which claims to be ruled by law."

It noted that the "discreet and beneficial intervention" of the state took place "without the meddling of non-governmental organisations or international rapports."

L'Authentique echoed other dailies when it voiced fear that the arrests could be "an ideal opportunity to question the existence of self-defence groups and the right to self-defence."

The North African country has been in the grip of an "Islamic" insurrection since the cancellation in 1992 of the second round of general elections that the now-outlawed Islamic Salvation Front was poised to win. More than 60,000 people have died in the violence, according to Western estimates.

Numerous reports have arisen in recent months regarding the possible involvement of forces on the government side in atrocities against civilians, though Algiers routinely blames Islamist guerrilla groups.



Mandela angers his ancestors after bee attack

JOHANNESBURG (AFP)

— South African President Nelson Mandela is in trouble with his ancestors after being attacked by a swarm of honey bees at the weekend, local traditional healers said Tuesday. The stinging attack on the 79-year-old head of state indicates he has been given a "strong warning" by his ancestors, a healer told SABC public television. Mandela said he was stung four or five times on the stomach and "also in parts that I can't mention to a young lady" after taking a bath in his Quana, Eastern Cape home last weekend. According to ethnic Xhosa tradition, a visit by bees represents good luck, but the drones bore ill fortune for those they sting.

Stallone being honoured for lifetime achievement

LOS ANGELES (AP) — He may be just 51, but Sylvester Stallone is being honoured for lifetime achievement. The Palm Beach International Film Festival will salute the action star Friday in Boca Raton, Florida. "I'm honoured to receive the award," Stallone, who has a home in Florida, said. Stallone's movies, including the "Rocky" and "Rambo" series, have earned more than \$2 billion.

Besson is being sued

PARIS (AFP) — French director Luc Besson is being sued by a scriptwriter who claims Besson stole his idea for the hit film "The Professional." Frank Gerardi says there are "blatant similarities" between his script and the screenplay for Besson's 1994 film, also known as "Leon." Gerardi's lawyers say that he wrote his script in 1990 and submitted it to a film company run by Luc Besson's father Claude. It portrays a doomed relationship between a young boy brought up by drugs dealers and a paid killer, and Gerardi claims Besson's movie is suspiciously similar.

Queen Elizabeth to help Fergie buy home

LONDON (AFP) — The Duchess of York is close to completing a financial settlement with Queen Elizabeth II that will help her buy a secure home for herself and her children, the Daily Telegraph newspaper reported. According to the newspaper, negotiations on the settlement are expected to take place over the next few weeks and could mean that the former wife of Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, will move out of the marital home for good and into a new permanent home later this year.

Redford saves wildlife habitat

SUNDANCE (AP) — Robert Redford is saving a wildlife habitat. The actor is donating 850 acres of land, watershed and alpine meadows to Utah Open Lands to protect it from development. "The Redford family has strong feelings about the land, and they want to make sure it is preserved forever," said Julie Mack, his spokeswoman. "If the family decides down the road to sell the property, whoever does [buy it], does so with the understanding it cannot be developed." Ms. Mack said. Utah Open Lands is an organisation that works to preserve open space and farmland.

World

Iraqi foreign minister and...  
CAIRO (AFP) — Iraqi Foreign Minister...  
Saddam Hussein...  
Iraqi foreign minister...  
Saddam Hussein...  
Iraqi foreign minister...  
Saddam Hussein...

Volume 23 Number 6813

## King, Neta move forward

By Alia A. Toukan

AMMAN — King Hussein and Queen...  
King Hussein...  
Queen...  
King Hussein...  
Queen...  
King Hussein...  
Queen...

## Cohen to visit

By Tareq Ayoub

AMMAN — U.S. Deputy Secretary William Cohen is expected to visit Jordan on Saturday, where he will meet with King Hussein and Prime Minister...  
Cohen...  
King Hussein...  
Prime Minister...  
Cohen...  
King Hussein...  
Prime Minister...

## Three Israeli soldiers lightly wounded in Lebanon

By Tareq Ayoub

HAIFA — Three Israeli soldiers were lightly wounded in a clash with Hezbollah fighters in Lebanon on Thursday, Israeli officials said. The soldiers were treated at a military hospital in Haifa. Hezbollah claimed to have killed one Israeli soldier and wounded three others. The clash occurred in the town of Marjayoun, near the Lebanese-Syrian border.

## Queen Elizabeth to help Fergie buy home

By Tareq Ayoub

LONDON — The Duchess of York is close to completing a financial settlement with Queen Elizabeth II that will help her buy a secure home for herself and her children, the Daily Telegraph newspaper reported. According to the newspaper, negotiations on the settlement are expected to take place over the next few weeks and could mean that the former wife of Prince Andrew, the Duke of York, will move out of the marital home for good and into a new permanent home later this year.

## Redford saves wildlife habitat

By Tareq Ayoub

SUNDANCE — Robert Redford is saving a wildlife habitat. The actor is donating 850 acres of land, watershed and alpine meadows to Utah Open Lands to protect it from development. "The Redford family has strong feelings about the land, and they want to make sure it is preserved forever," said Julie Mack, his spokeswoman. "If the family decides down the road to sell the property, whoever does [buy it], does so with the understanding it cannot be developed." Ms. Mack said. Utah Open Lands is an organisation that works to preserve open space and farmland.